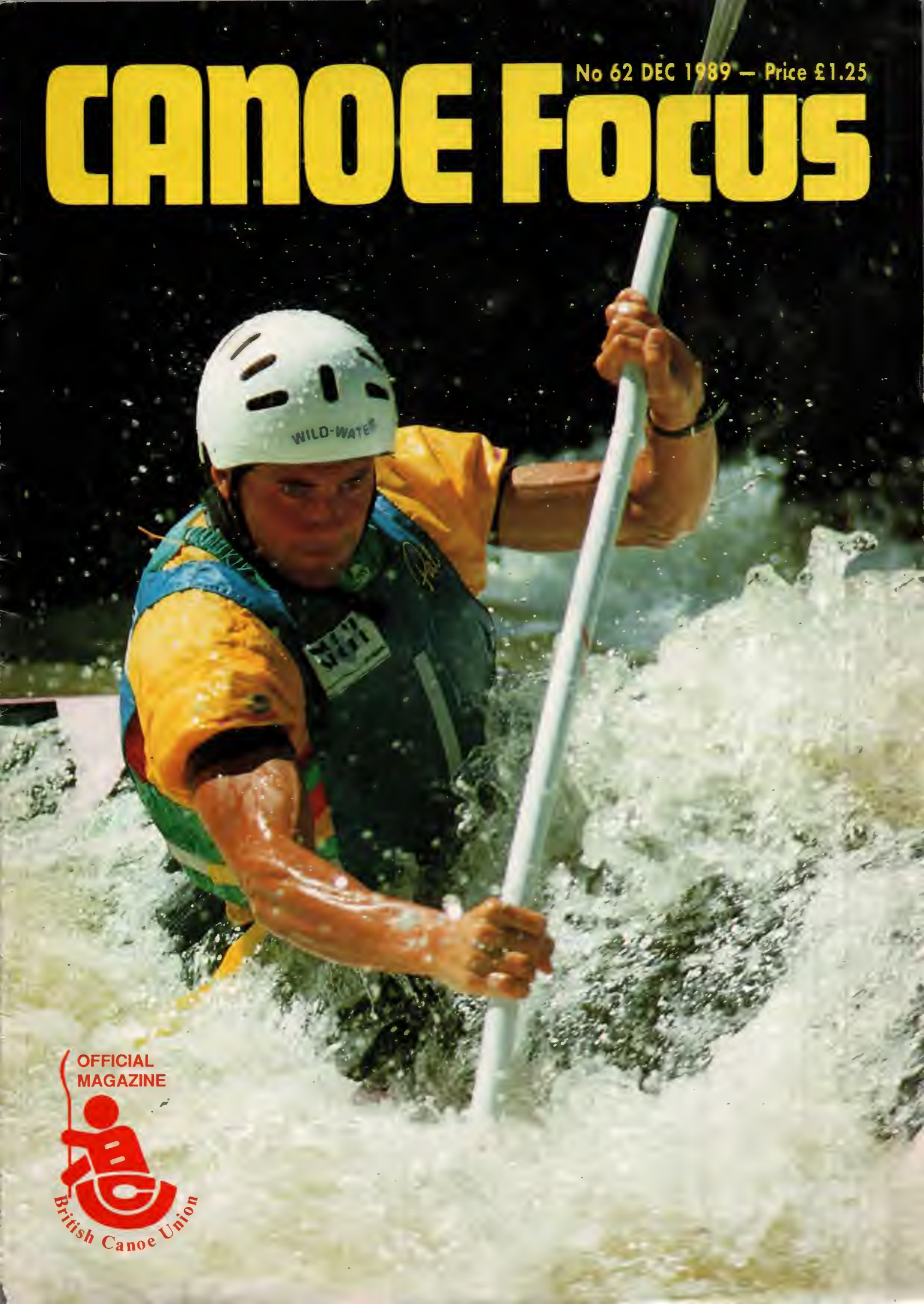


CANOE FOCUS

No 62 DEC 1989 — Price £1.25



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Front Cover

Richard Fox at the McConkey Slalom 1989
By Chris Worrall - winning entry in the
Canoe Focus Photography Competition.

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Here we go here we go here we go - part of the 50+ canoeing group from Birmingham. "Doing this feat made our knees wobble, our hearts beat faster and the adrenalin flow but we did it and its all thanks to Dave Bateman of Ackers Canoe Club who has been patiently coaching us on the canal"

CANOEING PHOTOGRAPHY:

Judged by Lee Frost, Photo Answers Magazine



First: Chris Worrall - see Front Cover - Richard Fox at the Paul McConkey Slalom.

Well, what can I say? This picture is absolutely superb. In fact it's as good, if not better than any of the shots I see taken by professional sport photographers.

As well as being well exposed, pin sharp and tightly composed, it's also timed to perfection. And speaking as one who's tried, achieving this is no mean feat!

Just look at the expression of grim determination etched across Richard's face. See how his muscles and veins are taut with effort as he battles through a raging torrent.

This is canoeing photography at its best. Well done and good luck in the future.



Second: Mike Uschold

Many of you took the scenic route, but none of your entries managed to equal Mike's.

His picture has a peaceful quality about it that really sums up the basic joys of jumping into a canoe and paddling down a quiet river into the heart of the countryside.

The rich, earthy autumnal colours are partly responsible for this and so is the crisp, clear afternoon light that brings these colours to life

But perhaps the most enduring aspect of Mike's picture is its simplicity. No fancy techniques or flashy telephoto lenses were required and any one of you could have taken it had you been there, in Roy Gorge, at that moment, with a camera in your hands. Honest.

<



^

Third: Mike Bird

Here's another fine example of a well anticipated and well executed action picture.

Knowing that sooner or later the canoeist would tackle the slalom gate shown, Mike Bird pre-focused on a point just beyond it, tripping the shutter once his subject had entered the viewfinder.

A telephoto lens helped Mike get right into the heart of the action, but in situations like this you still need lightning-quick reactions because everything's happening at such a rapid pace.

Competition Results



Fourth: Mike Taylor

This picture shows New Zealand surf canoist Dave Michell getting up to a few fancy tricks at the World Wave Ski Championships (Newquay, August 28th 1989)

And I must admit I like it a lot - although it wouldn't have suffered one bit had Mike managed to get Dave a little larger in the frame by shooting through a longer lens.

Nevertheless, it's well caught, a fast shutter speed has stopped any movement dead, the colours are nice and vibrant and the play of light on the surf makes you want to reach out and touch it.

Fifth: Brett Storry

I was impressed by the active and exciting composition of this picture of the Falls of Leny in Scotland. Brett could have tripped the shutter at any time during the canoeist's descent, but instead chose to wait until the last moment, dwarfing him against a lethal-looking stretch of whitewater.

The outcome is an image that's packed full of action and high drama. It says a great deal about the situation, and even though you can't see much of the canoeist, it's easy to imagine the thoughts racing through his mind.





OPEN CANOE TECHNIQUE

CHOOSING A CANOE PADDLE

Part 2 of the series by Colin Broadway

GETTING THE LENGTH RIGHT.

We have heard so many rules of thumb in selecting the right paddle length, up to your chest/chin/nose/eyes/top of head/arms stretch etc.

One of these might work if we were to paddle standing up!

How can all or even any of these be right? - when you consider that some people have long legs and short bodies, and others have short legs and long bodies, and that regardless of sitting or kneeling your leg length doesn't come into it, and when paddling, you don't want to ever lift your hand above your head - it's tiring.

Couple this with the fact that some paddles have blades as long as 26", and others are as short as 17".

Then consider the height above water that your seat or thwart is, add to that different styles of paddling and all these rules of thumb must go out of the window.

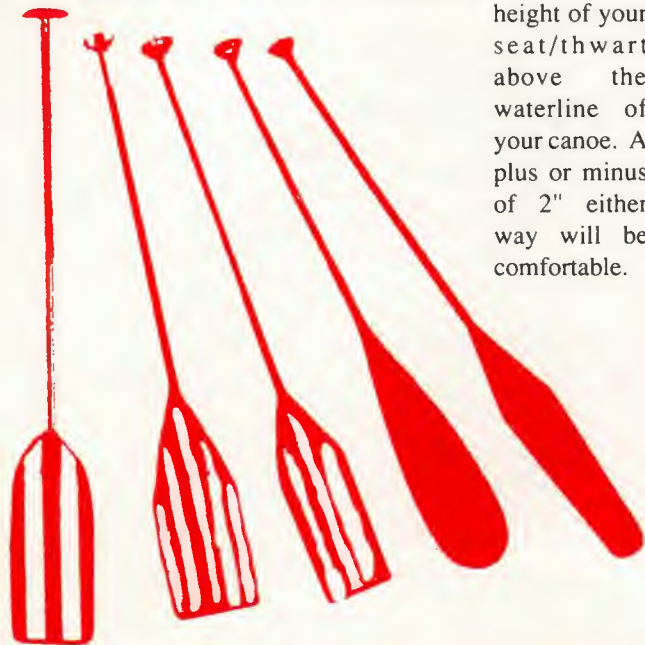
We have even heard that both bow and stern paddlers should have paddles two inches shorter than each other, the arguments both sound good, but if you listen to both and keep going 2" shorter, then you have no paddle left.

If I haven't proved the point yet, depending on what I am doing, my style of paddling and the paddle design, one of my paddles is only 48½" long and another is 66" - a difference of 17½" and both are the right size for me!

Bearing the above in mind and regardless of the paddle model, bent or straight shaft, traditional or modern blade, there is a rule of thumb that works (except for high kneeling sprint paddlers).

Measure the shaft length, rather than the overall length. The shaft length should equal the distance from one's shoulder to the waterline of the canoe. To determine this distance, sit erect on a chair and measure from one's chin to the seat, then add the

height of your seat/thwart above the waterline of your canoe. A plus or minus of 2" either way will be comfortable.



Now we have that sorted, lets look at

PADDLE BLADE DESIGN.

Paddle blades fall into four major headings for different usages



Snow shovels:

Are easy to recognise, they are normally flat, flexible, cheap and have a rib running down the middle to take the strain for added strength when clearing your drive. The rib is the problem. It will not allow a clean stroke, and coupled with a flexible blade which if it bends on dry land, it will bend when you are paddling, results in a loss of power.

Traditional or Guide Paddles:

Often called Beavertail's or Ottetail's depending on the cut of the blade, both have long thin blades, either laminated, or for better quality paddles, made from one piece of hardwood.

These paddles are ideal for deep water, such as canal and lake cruising, wilderness tripping and style paddling, the long slender blade making them functionally aesthetic.

Choose an Ottetail if your paddling is deep water or lakes only, but take care as you come into shore. The Beavertail is a more versatile traditional paddle, and although designed for deep water won't come to much harm on the occasional section of shallow water.

Modern Paddles:

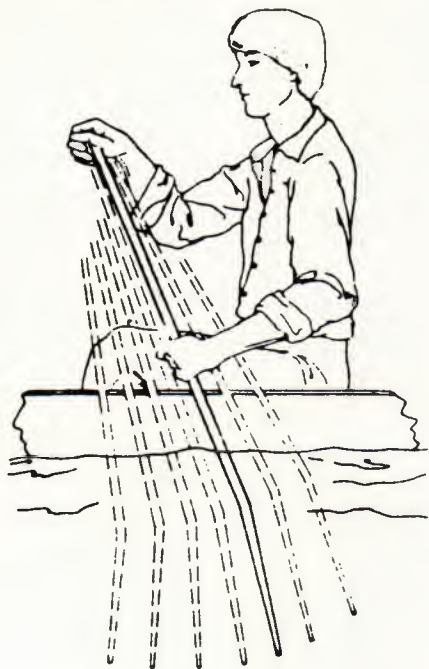
Have shorter blades and square cut tips. They are more of a general purpose all round paddle, working well on rivers with the occasional shallows, and models with blades 8" wide being great for turning the power on when needed.

Good modern paddles are laminated to stop the warping of a wide blade area.

Bent Shaft Paddles:

Contrary to popular belief, they have been around quite a while, ever since Gene Jensen won the 500 mile marathon from Bemidji to Minneapolis in 1948.

They work well in both shallow and deep water, flat and whitewater, with the angle being right for support strokes too. They do offer increased efficiency, but only if you change your paddle style to a short stroke. Thus the blade stays vertical throughout the stroke as you unwind your body, you are then not pushing water down or lifting water up. But do use them the right way round.



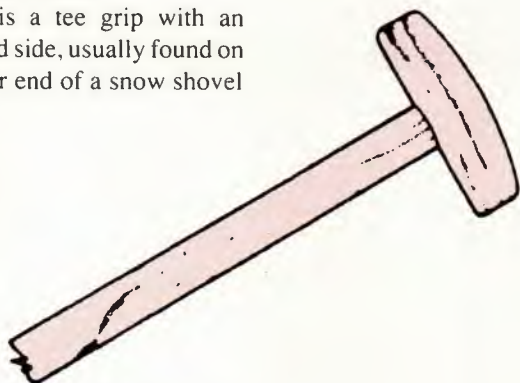
Couple this short stroke with the 'sit and switch' style of paddling, changing sides instead of putting in steering strokes: this not only drives a canoe faster for the same effort, but also reduces muscle fatigue.

PADDLE GRIPS:

Again these fall into four major styles:

The Boat Hook:

Which is a tee grip with an extended side, usually found on the other end of a snow shovel

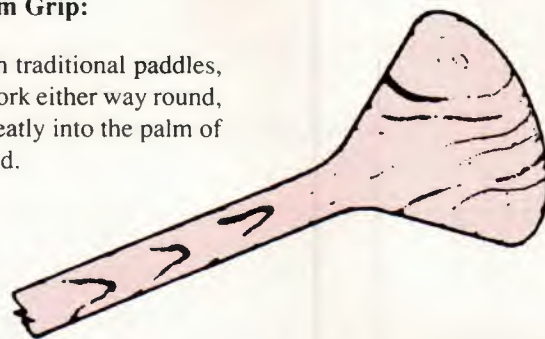


The T Grip or Hammerhead:

Much favoured by slalom paddlers for additional control in rocky whitewater, where a firm grip is needed and a paddle may be knocked out of your hand by the rocks in the river bed!

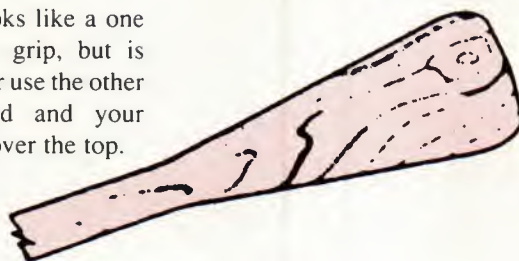
The Palm Grip:

Found on traditional paddles, which work either way round, and fit neatly into the palm of your hand.



The Scroll Grip:

At first, looks like a one sided palm grip, but is designed for use the other way around and your fingers go over the top.



PADDLE MATERIALS

Cheaper paddles have plastic blades and aluminum shafts. The problem is that the blades flex, and the shafts don't, resulting in loss of power in the blade, and cold shafts.

Wood must be favourite, as the paddle flexes throughout its length, absorbing any knocks before reaching your hands and wrists.

Kevlar/Carbon fibre paddles are stiff, and more efficient and they don't flex too much, but the shock of the power of the water or any rocks you may hit is transferred straight into your hand, then wrist, then arm followed by shoulder and back. The risk of injury being greater. Please don't use paddles of this construction if you know you have a weak point, the paddle will find it. And don't use one until you have stopped growing unless you want to damage your body for the rest of your life.

WHAT'S COMING NEXT?

Double cranked paddles are being played with, what's the advantage?

The theory goes, that the double crank brings the power in your little finger on the hand that grips the shaft into play. We'll just have to wait and see how much power there is in a little finger. Don't laugh though, everyone did when bent shafts first came out.

IN CONCLUSION

What paddle to recommend? For me its a bent shaft every time, they allow you to go faster (or further) for less effort.

However if I'm teaching the strokes laid down in the BCU open canoe syllabus, then I revert back to a modern paddle with a wide blade.

As for material, wood every time, unless I'm racing when its a Kevlar/carbon fibre foam filled paddle that weighs next to nothing. But then, it's too late for me, I've wrecked my body already.

Competition Scene

Scenes from the British Open - Llangollen 21/22 October 1989



Maria Francis - new British Ladies champion ^ Photographs Chris Worrall

Osborne/Shreeve - selected for Olympic Squad v



SLALOM

Llangollen Canoeing Week-sponsored by Wales Tourist Board

The main worry on the Friday night preceding the Llangollen Canoeing Week was lack of water in the Dee. But the heavens opened, the river rose 2 feet overnight, a few last minute course adjustments and the stage was set for the kind of event everyone had come to love and expect.

In the British Open, it was good to see Russ Smith on form - his win (mens K1) should see him into the Olympic Squad. Mention should also be made of Lyn Simpson (2nd, ladies' K1), still a junior, and Osborne/Shreeve, whose C2 performance has put them into the Olympic Training Squad for the first time.

The second weekend was the International, attended by paddlers from France, Sweden, Ireland, West Germany and Latvia. On the home front, there were the National teams from England, Scotland and Wales as well as representatives from the GB World Championships team. A successful day for the British paddlers with not much of a look-in, medal wise for the visiting internationals. Dave Crosbee's hard work and determination over the season paid off and he took the mens' K1 from Raspin, while Gareth Marriott demonstrated his continuing progress by beating 13 times British champion Martyn Hedges into second place. Maria Francis continued her winning streak, notching up her second gold medal for the ladies' events. (Both Liz Radford and Karen Davies were absent - Liz has had a successful operation on her back, so lets hope to see her on the start line again soon.)

A dramatic slalom sprint down the Town Falls provided the fitting Grand Finale to a great week. The traffic stopped, the crowd "aahed" and Albert Woods truly excelled himself by his commentry from the railway station (artistically mingled with the occasional 'toot' from passing trains).

The Norwich Union 'Paddles Up' was filmed in the intervening week - and here events on the water were upstaged by a mysterious 'International Incident' which was developing around the Latvian visitors. Headlines such as "THE MISSING REDS" appeared in the National press, but luckily all was well and the Latvians arrived at Llangollen in the nick of time, having been diverted via Holme Pierrepont. Paddles Up will be shown on BBC TV in due course - the date has yet to be notified

LLANGOLLEN CANOEING WEEK - RESULTS

British Open 21-22 October

C2

1st Richardson/Thompson. 2. Clough/Clough. 3. Osborne/Shreeve

C1

1. Mark Delaney 2. Peter Bell
3. Bill Horsman.

Mens Kayak

1. Russ Smith 2. Robert Wright
3. Len Shackleton.

Ladies Kayak

1. Maria Francis 2. Lynn Simpson
3. Lara Tipper

International Slalom 28 October

Mens K1 (Senior)

1. Dave Crosbee, England. 2. Ian Raspin, England 3. Shaun Pearce, England.

Mens K1 (Youth)

1. Paul Ebrey (Wales) 2. P. O'Connor, Ireland
3. Leo Hoare, England

Ladies K1

1. Maria Francis (GB)
2. Lynn Simpson (England)
3. Elizabeth Micheler (FRG)

C1

1. Gareth Marriott (GB) 2. Martyn Hedges (GB) 3. Bill Horsman (England)

C2

1. Richardson/Thompson (GB) 2. Clough/Clough (England) 3. Green/Green (England)

Talisman Inter Club Championships

As we arrived at Cardington on Friday 8 September 1989, it soon became apparent that the facilities that Jim Croft had promised, had been fully backed by the Sponsor, 'Talisman Low Alcohol Lager'. The site was large and most clubs managed to find an area to camp together. There was a large and impressive marquee and the stage was set for the Challenge Final. The first ordeal for most clubs is to attend, and get their whole team through the Team Managers meeting, this did not seem half as formidable this year, may be it was the fact that there was a

bar! Maybe this helped it run more smoothly, another chance to thank the sponsor!!

Well Saturday came, the shallow water a little disappointing for the best paddlers but considering the Summer and the acute shortage of water everywhere, it was no mean feat just to have water at all! The course proved to be just a bit trickier than some would have liked and taking into account a strong wind there were not too many clear runs!!

As usual the Club Challenge for whatever reasons finds people/paddlers and parents doing strange things! Andy Raspin paddling C1 for instance, both Mum and Dad Ayres doing their thing for Banbury Canoe Club, with Jacki running down the bank shouting, "Careful Mum! don't try the breakout! Oh! no mind the pole!". Slightly unusual forms of encouragement!

Dick Kerswell managing 2 runs in a C1 not the fastest finisher but definitely very relieved to have made most of the gates. (He didn't beat Andy!)

So with the team managers realising that the job is not all its cracked up to be and that it is actually very hard work. The first day came to an end, at least on the Water! But the marquee pulsed into life it was nice to see competitors letting their hair down, I didn't realise that Ian Raspin was such a good dancer! Or that Mike Carter was a barman! (Don't give up the day job Mike!)

Well Sunday dawned with all the team managers - organisers - judges and competitors on time, the only thing which seemed to be struggling was the Super Loo! with the queue getting longer, the possibility of communal use was being voiced (but only by the men).

By now the activity of the team managers and the calculations of points was becoming a spectator sport in its own right! Most of the team managers were on the point of losing their voices, but not their sense of humour. Tony Arrowsmith and the timing team were as usual doing a sterling job. The chief Judge Albert Woods found time for a sit down (with refreshments) in the marquee, and as the competition drifted to a close there was frantic activity in the marquee with large trestle tables bowing under the weight of the magnificent prizes. The sponsor 'Talisman Low Alcohol Lager' had both done Canoe Slalom proud!

The prize giving was well supported (nothing to do with Jim refusing to open the gate) with the marquee bursting at the seams and the beautiful trophies very well received.

The votes of thanks made and the weekend over it only remains to say thanks to everyone. Particularly Jim Croft, who told us it would be 'Alright on the night' and it was! The residents of Cardington for putting up with us, all those who helped, the chief Judge Albert Woods, the timing team 'Arrowsmiths happy gang' and the sponsors - worthy of another mention - 'Talisman Low Alcohol Lager'.

Pearl Mulholland

The Interclubs event was won by Tees Kayak club, with Forth CC second and Staffs & Stone 3rd

Bibs

To retain your bib deposit, you MUST return your bib to the Bib Issuing officer, together with SAE before 31 December 1989.

You may apply for your 1990 bib any time after 1 February and Issuing Officers are the same as this year except for the following Divisions:

Premier K1 Men Mrs K Ratcliffe, 64 Squires Lane, Tyldesley, Manchester M29 8JF

Div 1 K1 Men Mrs J Davis - note new address; 13 Harold Street, Bingley, West Yorkshire.

Div 2 K1 Men Mr and Mrs B Barber, 3 Netherlea, Hermitage Lane, Cranage, Holmes Chapel CW4 8HX.

Div 3 K1 Men Mrs J Collinge, 55 Bury and Bolton Road, Radcliffe M26 0LF.

Div 4 Canadians Andrew Budd, 71 Orion Close, Lordshill, Southampton SO1 8BN
REMEMBER TO TELL YOUR RANKING COMPILER IF YOU CHANGE ADDRESS - IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE SURE YOUR 1990 YEARBOOK GOES TO THE CORRECT ADDRESS!

An Apology

Apologies to Ian and Sue Janes whose names were misspelt and in particular to Kath Ratcliffe who mysteriously was listed as Keith Ratcliffe in October's Focus. All three had just passed the International Judges Exam.

Team Gate Timing

During this season there has been a difference of opinion as to how the team gate should be timed.

Last season, for a gate to become 'live', one had to cross the gate line, which fell in very nicely with the team gate but this season, a gate has only to be touched to become 'live'. Does this now mean that the time starts as soon as a gate is touched?

The Judging Committee, after some considerable debate, and after listening to the various arguments, have decided to issue the following guidance.

The Team Gate should be regarded as just that, a gate that all the team have to complete as a team and that the time recorded should be the time it takes for the team to pass through the gate. Therefore, the time should start when the first body passes through the gate line and finish when the last body passes through.

In the case of C2's, the team gate is treated in a different way to the finish line where the clock stops when the body of a C2 crosses the finish line. The time for the team gate will stop when the last body of the team goes through, so if the last boat is a C2 then the last body of that C2 will stop the clock. This is because it is technically possible for the last body not to pass through the gate if the boat drifts sideways and a pole passes between the front paddler and the rear paddler. In this case, a fifty penalty is awarded, as usual, plus the time penalty because not ALL the team have passed through the gate.

With reference to the actual time, the rule says 'within 15 seconds' so as soon as the stopwatch shows 15 the team are out of time and incur the time penalty.

WILD WATER RACING

In order to capitalise on their excellent individual results in the World Championships this year and provide their star performers with the flexibility their continuing progress will require, the Wild Water Racing Executive Committee have taken the unprecedented step of selecting Mens K1 Silver Medallist Neil Stamps and Mens C1 Bronze Medallist Steve Wells to represent Britain in International Events for the next 2 years including the World Championships in Bovec, Yugoslavia.

They have also selected Julie Ashton after her fine performance at the Worlds to represent Britain for the next year, including the Europa Cup and Pre-World Championship events. This gesture will help Julie stabilise her training, enable her to peak for the summer season and avoid the problems her University finals may cause during the selection period.

The selection venues for all other teams for Wild Water racing ie Senior, Junior and B teams will be based purely on results from races at Grandtully March 11, Tees Race March 18 and Washburn Race April 7, the exact formula to be used will be announced when the team sizes have been decided.

In order to capitalise further on their results and offer a wider spread coaching network the Wild Water Committee are keen to hear from anyone interested in assisting with National Teams, Regional Squads or Club Coaching contact John Handyside 0602 892313.

John Handyside is also willing to organise weekends at different venues for people interested in becoming trainers or coaches for Wild Water Racing or just for those paddlers interested in improving their knowledge of the sport.

John Handyside

POLO

International Success for GB Polo Squad

1989 has been a year of outstanding success for Britain's Canoe Polo teams. Out of 6 international tournaments attended by the mens' squad, four have resulted in overall wins against some of the best teams in the world.

The international year started at Lyon, France in February. Britain was third overall, with France in first place. At Gottingen in May, better results and a convincing win for Britain: 8-1 to GB 'A' in the final with the Netherlands.

The British International Open at Luton was attended by 3 British mens' teams; GB 'A' 1st, GB 'B' 2nd and GB 'C' 3rd. The September tournament at Lochriste, France, was attended by all the European teams and also the Australians; none of whom proved any match for Britain's men. Another victory for GB 'A', beating Australia in the final.

Greater success briefly eluded the squad in Essen, later on in the month: in this tournament, the 'B' team turned the tables by reaching 4th place, with the 'A' team coming 6th - the management put it down to the more comfortable accommodation enjoyed by their German hosts - our poor lads

had to camp - 1, 2, 3 (who won the war anyway?)

And so to Caen in October, where all 3 mens' teams competed. The 'A' team won (this is getting boring), beating France 3-2 in the final, GB 'B' came 9th and GB 'C' 13th.

On the ladies' side, the Mutineers represented Britain as GB 'A' and have had an equally successful time: 2nd at Essen (to Australia) 1st at Gottingen and 1st at Luton. St Albans were GB 'B' and played internationally at Luton, where they were placed 2nd. 1990 sees the formation for the first time of a British ladies' squad, 12 players, to be selected at the British Championships, Crystal Palace. Dave Brown, himself a Senior British Squad player will be coaching the squad.

Warriors Stake Claim for Div 1

Tournament number 4 in division 2 North saw Derwent warriors take maximum points from their 5 games and go top with 2 tournaments of the season left.

With Lakeland and Humbersiders, the other 2 divisional front runners missing, the second best team on the night were Headingley Panthers who won 4 and lost 1 to jump 5 places in the league.

The tournament was held in a 25m pool at Armley in Leeds; the small pool led to some scrappy games and a great deal of long range shooting. Not surprisingly the most important players on the night were the goalkeepers who managed to keep out much of the flak.

The Mutineers notched up their first wins of the season against Leeds Poly A and Dudley B and showed why they are still the best ladies team in Europe.

Fortunes were mixed for Dudley B and Matlock who gained 9 and 8 points respectively from 5 games each. Leeds Poly A failed to capitalise on some good work and were left still looking for their first win of the season.

BCU Canoe Polo 1990/1 Season

National League entry application forms are now in circulation and may be obtained by enclosing a SAE to the following address: Jo Kirkbride, National Leagues Organiser, 71 Pica Cottages, Pica, Cumbria CA14 4DQ. (Also available from: Divisional Secretaries, Committee Secretary and Regional Representatives).

Please note: pool booking forms should have been returned by November 30. Please return any outstanding booking forms ASAP.

Polo EGM

"The BCU Polo Committee are calling an extraordinary general meeting immediately prior to the AGM on Sunday 7 January at 11.00am, Coventry Leisure Centre to consider the following motion. Amend the constitution as follows item 11 to read 'nominations for election to this committee, other than regional representatives who are appointed by the regions must be supported by 2 full BCU, CANI, SCA, WCA members. Voting shall be by simple majority at the AGM'"

OFFSHORE RACING IN PARADISE

by Dave Kay

If you read the last Focus, you'll know about the Royal Canoe Club attempt at the world's most celebrated offshore canoe race. The Moloka'i Ho is a 41 mile race between the Hawaiian islands of Moloka'i and Oahu. The challenge is undertaken by 9 man crews using 6 seater 'Outrigger' canoes - therefore involving crew changes on the move.

This was Royal's third attempt at the Moloka'i - the difference being that the 1989 crew was sponsored by Diet Sprite for a medal attempt on the 'Master Class' (over 35 years old). In the 1988 race Royal had come in some 25 minute behind the Masters winners - so this seemed a good challenge.

Preparation in Paradise

We arrived at Waikiki Beach (adjacent to Honolulu on the island of Oahu) on Sunday 1 October, a week before the race. The first 2 days were spent acclimatising to the 90° temperature plus humidity and the occasional 6 hour sub-tropical rainstorm. The second day seemed an unlikely combination of a sauna with a winter storm at the Washburn! As wild water racers we felt well at home.

The major task was the location of training and race boats. Race spec outrigger canoes are over 40ft long and weigh a minimum of 400lbs (that's the rules), so you do not bring your own boat from England. Even transporting them locally requires special trailers and some local driving skills. Our thanks go to Jody, our local mentor and Mr Fixit, who helped us with the hire arrangements for 2 boats and the essential support motor boat for both training and the race.

By mid-week training was going well. We were concentrating on the technicalities of crew changes on the move - much more realistically rehearsed in the warmth of the Pacific than off Brighton beach. The old hands warned about the 'men in grey suits' but no sharks were sighted - though they are apparently very keen to feed at river mouths when the water is disturbed after heavy rain.

One training session involved 3 'head to head' 500 metre sprints against the Waikiki Yacht Club crew - suppliers of our training boat. Our 3-0 victory on a canal (yes - Honolulu Canal!) by around a boat length each time is not however a fair gauge for a 5 hour race on the ocean. Despite this interlude, training was geared more to tapering for the event - you can't train for a marathon in the last week - though some members found time for the odd bit of wave ski paddling and lambretta stunting.

The Race

On the day before the race everyone (over 500 competitors and helpers for the 60 entrants) flies from Honolulu to the island of Moloka'i which is beautifully remote and sparsely populated - but still has the obligatory surf beaches and sunsets. The boats, which have been transported by sea and road during the week, are rigged for racing in the picturesque Hale O Lano harbour with more than a little help for us foreigners from the local veterans - Hawaiian canoe macrame is a whole undiscovered artform!

The race commences at 0730 hours on the Sunday morning - just after sunrise - with a view to finishing at Waikiki Beach before lunch. After a prayer of blessing (canoesport is very much tied in with the whole Hawaiian way of life) the boats line up across 300 metres of Ocean with local favourites Huinalu obviously poised to follow a very southerly course whilst Offshore (aptly named Californian contenders) planned a more conservative crossing. At 0720 the organisers decided they could hold the line no longer - the 41 mile trek had begun and Royal were off to a strong start amongst the first 20 crews.

The race is hard to follow as a whole with bunches of crew navigating differing courses and even those nearby being hidden in the troughs of waves for much of the time - even on a very placid crossing like this was to be. With the surges of the ocean, it is even hard to tell how you are doing against the closest boats - let alone where the other in the Masters class might be. For long periods of time we ran apparently head to head with known rivals - first with Great Lakes Masters for the first 4 miles along the Moloka'i coastline to 'Penguin Shallows', then for over an hour on a converging course with Outrigger Masters to Diamond Head on Oahu - only to lose them in the surf in the last half hour.

Each crew member will recount his own memories - his own personal highs and lows over nearly 6 hours. Everyone paddles about 4 hours but will find different sections hard depending on how the rests fall. For example, 2 paddlers have to race for the first 50 minutes non-stop because of the first changeover rules even though the typical tour of duty is 24 minutes in the boat followed by 12 minutes rest.

With half an hour to go Royal were lying third in the Masters class and possibly 24th overall. In the final run in we were passed by 2 Master boats (Outrigger from the local elite club and Great Lakes from Canada) indeed disaster almost struck in the final 500 metres when heading round the Waikiki Beach surf break - one wave came out of nowhere (the size of a house as they always are in the stories!) and we found ourselves surfing our 40ft canoe sideways in the soup. Heroic exaggerations apart, this was a class bit of canoeing in a very unlucky moment - but no one saw it.

Royal finished 5th in Masters (28th overall out of 60). The Royal race time was 5 hours 49 minutes, just 8 minutes behind the winning Masters and having lost 4 minutes to 3rd place in the final run in. The verdict was that we were well pleased to have been in the running and that a careful analysis (tactical and physiological) of the last hour may hold the key to greater success. We also noted the number of past champions amongst our veteran rivals - both Moloka'i and Olympic.

Talking of Olympic champions - the overall race was won by Off Shore from San Diego, California. Their stroke off the start was none other than 1988 double Olympic gold medalist Greg Barton. The crew also included his K2 partner, plus Serge Corbijn (all time most successful American professional marathon canoe racer), plus the USA Olympic Ladies coach - none other than ex-Brit Willy Richtenstein.

When anyone whispers Moloka'i Ho over an idle pint, remember we are talking top class racing - especially considering it was Barton's first win in 4 attempts and in a new record time of 5 hours 7 minutes and the odd second or 2. Anyone for tennis?

MARATHON

Hasler Final

A sunny Sunday at Newark-on-Trent provided the venue for this year's Hasler Final (September 24). Having gone to considerable trouble to minimise clashes with local fishing events, the organisers (Combined Services) and competitors were surprised to be greeted by a coachload of anglers! After the initial shock had worn off, things were settled amicably: the fishermen

(outnumbered for once!) disappeared up river for their days' entertainment, while the canoeists got down to the serious business of marathon racing. 35 teams had entered, with a total of 500 competitors.

The Div 1 race - 12 miles, 4 portages - was dominated by Chris Ballard (Lichfield) and A Heath (Combined Services). The closely matched pair quickly paddled away from the rest of the pack and were really in a race of their own. Chris Ballard taking over in the closing stages to clinch the mens' race.

Meanwhile in Div 3, another exciting contest

was developing in the ladies' event, eventually won by Anna Ballard (wife of Chris) with Sandra Troop (Nottingham) in second place, only 49 seconds behind.

After the customary long wait, the winners were announced - Richmond Canoe Club. Thanks to Steve Jackson of Combined Services for Masterminding a well organised event with excellent refreshment and camping facilities.

ARCTIC CANOE RACE 1989

Where was everybody out of the 230 senior entries in the D-W this year? Only 3 British crews - 2 K2's and a Canadian - made it to the start of the ACR at Kilpisjarvi, 250 miles above the Arctic Circle in Northern Finland.

It is the longest, most northerly, wildest, hardest (Grade V in parts), and arguably the greatest canoe marathon in Europe, if not the world.

The Race starts at 3 am local time on a lake whose northern shore forms the border between Finland, Sweden and Norway - so far north it's light continuously and snow lies on the hills throughout the year.

Day 1 is 80 miles of lakes with river sections between, spiced with Grade III rapids and a Grade IV immediately after lunch - enough to give anybody indigestion. This particular Grade IV is a 'penalty portage' - ie 20 minutes is added to your time for having enough common sense to recognise that 21ft of K2 doesn't like something closely resembling the top section of the Tryweryn with twice as much water. Once paddled (or portaged as in our case) it's just another 6 hour paddle to Karesuvanto. Everything depends on finishing the first day if you fancy your chances for a prize.

At the end of Day 1 we found the other British entries had not fared as well as ourselves. Both the K2 of Andrew Symes and David Drinkall and the C2 of Sean Horner-Glister and David Powell had taken a swim on one of the rapid sections before lunch and had had to retire. Andrew and David's K2 ended up in half - luckily they had a spare.

Day 2 and 3 passed in a blur of hard paddling with long sections of Grade II and occasional III. The monotony was broken by giving wash to the eventual K1 winner Kari Rauhanen (Finland) and Zlatko Oblokar (Yugoslavia) in a Whitewater Racer, who after a protracted tussle throughout the race with two very determined Germans, came out on top and won.

Day 4 was a rest day in Kolari, with a coach trip laid on by the organisers to Pajala just over the border into Sweden. A feast of spit roasted reindeer and potato salad thrown in made a welcome break from spaghetti, Coke and bananas.

The next day was another 50 mile bash with no white water worth mentioning. The following day is the shortest, but it proved to be the hardest - battling into a force 6 head wind. On exposed stretches of the river it soon began to resemble Poole Harbour, where we'd done the majority of our training.

The final day saw the two biggest rapids - Matkakoski and Kukkulankoski - Grade V and IV respectively. The first of these is about 2 miles after the compulsory lunch stop at Vuennonkoski. Both are spectacular pieces of water with large waves and stoppers. They also attract large crowds for obvious reasons. We successfully negotiated both and then it was eyeballs out for the finish - 10 miles downstream at Tornio.

We were Angus Fitchet and Rosemary Purkiss of Poole Harbour Canoe Club and finished 3rd K2 overall and first mixed K2 (difficult not to be as we were the only entry in that class). The two Finnish



ARCTIC CANOE RACE

Lukiokatu 10
95400 TORNIO
FINLAND
Puh./tel. (9698) 409 19, 400 48



K2's took 1st and 2nd place. After their troubles on the first day, the other British K2 and C2 completed every other section and successfully reached Tornio.

I hope I haven't fuelled yet further the feeling that this race is only for the super-fit and tough - all the rapids are portagable, and anyone with D-W experience or similar could compete. The Finnish people are of the friendliest, the Race organization is faultless and done with much enthusiasm and joy by all concerned.

Accommodation is in cabins situated on the river bank - all the race days finishing adjacent to the cabins or only a short drive away. Our travel and cabin bookings were dealt with by Sporting Travel Services who offer an excellent package of 9 nights accommodation and breakfast and arrange your ferry crossing - Harwich to Gothenburg being the shortest passage.

So don't miss out on a very special event. To paddle with people from all over Europe and America in such a beautiful and wild part of the world is an opportunity not to be missed.

Angus Fitchet

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by *BCU Director Trevor Bailey*

As reported with your last Focus, the membership structure changes were approved at the EGM held on 23rd September. The changes were designed to simplify the former structure, in order to enable a major drive or expansion to take place. We aim to provide more events, and to attract more members. These members are needed to increase income, increase influence, widen the base for excellence, meet Sports Council aims and to enable us to improve member services. After a wait of many years, I am delighted to be able to report that the new H.Q. building has been started at the National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont. It is hoped that the building will be completed before Christmas, and we will move in the first week of the new year. Staff currently at The Elms will continue to be based there, and staff currently at Mapperley Hall will transfer to the new building. As part of the same project, the centre will build a block containing changing rooms, showers, toilets, and the Slalom course control. This part of the project, funded by Sports Council and Nottingham County Council, should be completed by Easter. Details of our new address and telephone number will be notified as soon as available.

Mention of our new telephone number reminds me to make a request to all members. Staff are available to answer the telephone between 08.30 and 16.30, weekdays, 16.00 on Friday. Outside those times the answer-phone is on, and if you leave details we try to get back to you as soon as possible. This does not mean, of course, that staff are not working outside those times, but, by giving the above times, members can know the best time to telephone if they want an immediate response. It helps no-one, members or staff, if the answer-phone system is mis-used. Unfortunately, we have had a recent increase in the number of abusive and obscene messages left on the machine. Please co-operate with the system, it is there for your benefit, but if

constantly misused, will have to be withdrawn.

ACCESS - THE GOOD NEWS

Some successes have recently been achieved.

In North Wales an access agreement has been made for the Conway above Fairy Glen. The access agreement for the Dart has been extended by a month. On the 29th of October canoeists from all over Britain took part in a series of fund raising tours, to help pay for the legal costs in the Yorkshire Derwent access case.

At a national level we are already talking to the National Rivers Authority, the newly established protectors of our waterways network, trying to influence and guide them as they develop their first policies. We are also considering setting up a major legal study into British navigation law, giving us the knowledge to influence government policy when they carry out their promise to look at the laws of access to rivers in the future.

ACCESS - THE BAD NEWS

We have recently received reports of two incidents involving canoeists on 'sensitive' rivers. In both cases the riparian owners were subjected to a considerable amount of bad language. Such bad behaviour reflects on the whole of our sport, and the goodwill built up by contact and experience can be dashed by just one incident of "yob rule". Hopefully the canoeists concerned in these incidents were not members, but I would ask all members to remain polite at all times. If you have a right to be paddling and are challenged, a polite reply is all that is needed. If you should not be paddling there in the first place, abusive language is hardly likely to persuade the owner to enter into an access agreement.

I referred above to the newly created National Rivers Authority. Following water privatisation the NRA is the regulatory

arm of the Water industry. The operational arm is the Public Limited Companies. The BCU Council, at its meeting on 4th November, endorsed the view that the union should apply for shares in the PLC's in order to enable us to attend the AGMs and put forward canoeists views. Members are also encouraged to become shareholders to achieve the same end.

Finally, I return to the subject of the telephone. The range of queries that we receive at H.Q. is very wide, and for some reason we have recently been receiving a number of requests for information about canoeing in Kenya. Having consulted our man on the spot, our basic advice is, forget it! The crocodiles are huge, the hippos even bigger, and canoeing is not recommended. We understand that efforts are being made locally to design a craft sturdy enough to withstand croc attacks, but until that is available you are better advised to stay at home. You could always use your time up by reading the new, and much enhanced, BCU handbook.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH CANOE UNION

The AGM of the British Canoe Union will be held on Saturday 10 March at a venue in the London and South East region yet to be confirmed.

Members are reminded that Article 18(b) of the Union's Articles of Association requires that any motion for discussion at the Annual General Meeting not originating from the Council of Management, shall be

1. Signed by two full* members entitled to vote, and
2. Be lodged with the Secretary (Director) before 1 January 1990.

Article 13(c) requires that the nominations of candidates for election as elected members of the Council of Management are put forward in the form of such a motion. Nominations should be accompanied by a pen portrait of the candidate#. As a consequence of elected members of the Council of Management completing their two year electoral term, there will be five vacancies for membership of the Council.

Members entitled to vote include the following classes of membership:

- 1 Adult Basic
- 2 Life Comprehensive
- 3 Adult Comprehensive

(also full and life members under the old system)

Only members as designated in * above are eligible for nomination as elected members.

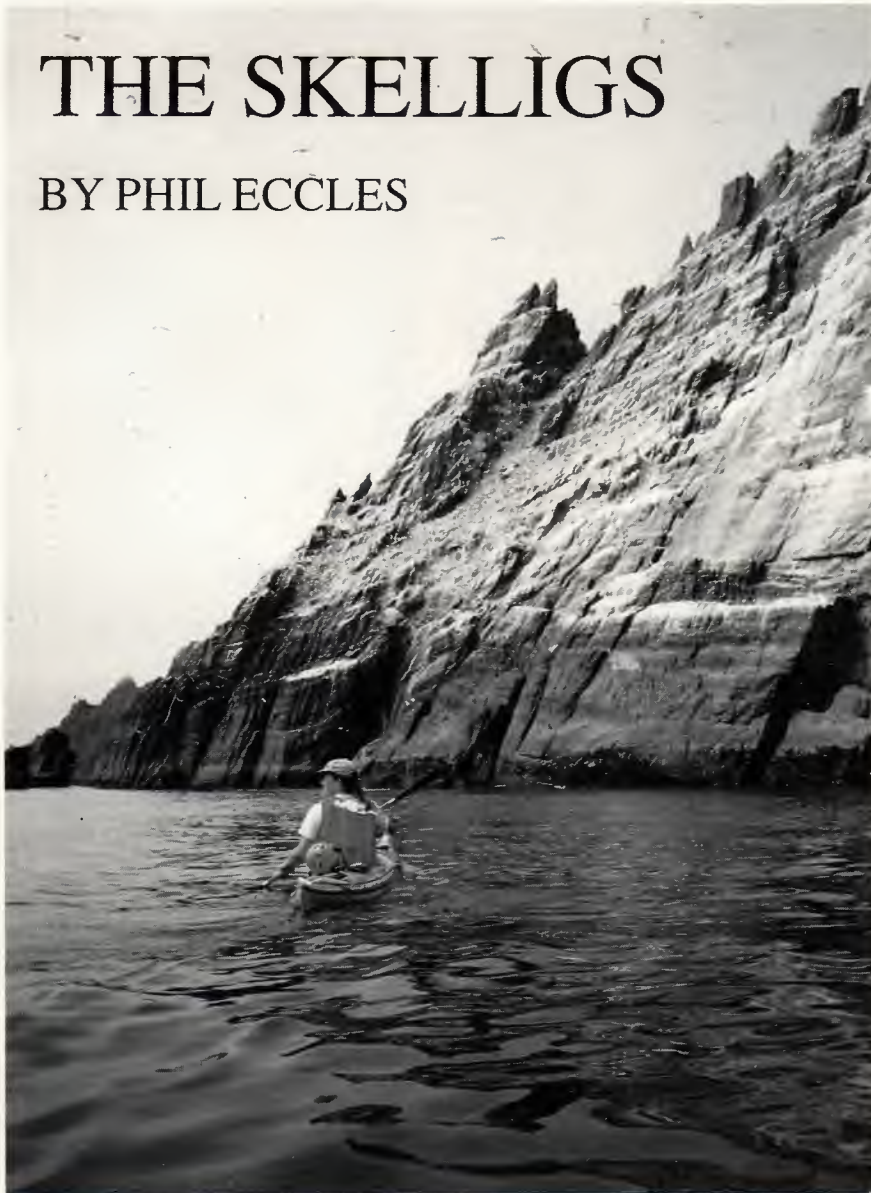
THE BCU OFFICE IS MOVING

In the new year to purpose built offices at Holme Pierrepont (next door to the slalom course).

Watch your next Focus for the new address; in the meantime, continue to use the Mapperley Hall address for general administration and enquiries, membership, coaching, finance and Canoe Focus. In addition to the move, we are also re-organising the membership section, so please be patient during the period mid December to mid January.

THE SKELLIGS

BY PHIL ECCLES



"There are two big rocks out there"

"Where?"

"There. About a mile offshore"

"Are they on the map?"

"Just"

"How do you mean ... just?"

"Well according to this map the outer island is called Skellig Michael and it's 7½ miles from the mainland and 9 from the nearest landing place."

"7½ miles! It must be high then"

"714 feet"

"Gulp"

And so began our fascination with The Skelligs as we drove along the Iveragh Peninsula in South West Ireland. They were indeed impressive pieces of rock with towering cliffs and sharp pinnacles shrouded with wispy grey cloud evoking images from Lord of the Rings. Further inquiry led to tales of deserted cells over a thousand years old, a huge gannet colony, a 3 knot tidal stream, fickle weather, big swells and other

ingredients from which memorable adventures are woven.

Mr Sullivan must be over 65 years old and he's lived at St Finan's Bay all his life. In the short summer season, when only a handful of tourists find their way to that quiet corner of the western world, he and his wife run one of the world's great campsites. Provided, of course, that you don't want plug-in luxuries. The toilet is a chemical bucket in a spotless sentry box outhouse, the walls of which are covered with 'Thank you' cards from visitors of bygone summers. The only field is smaller than half a football pitch and it's a mere 30 yards from a golden strip of sand some 100 yards across. As luck would have it the beach faces South West and it's nice to think that there's nothing but sea all the way to Venezuela!

Just up the lane a village shop happens to be the nerve centre of the community. It was common to find it open well after 10 o'clock at night with a huddle of women gathered round the counter gossiping in Gaelic. Eddie the donkey lives somewhere in the neighbourhood, often on the campsite, and he was always keen to stroll by to pass the time of day and check out anything good to eat that may have been left lying around.

The morning brought reasonable weather and a passable forecast. Our plan was to have a foray towards Puffin Island to get a better look at The Skelligs and, if the conditions were favourable, we would head out with enough gear for the two of us to spend the night there. It's funny, but I don't remember discussing this plan with anyone other than my wife, Jo, and yet as we popped into the shop to pick up the pre-requisite Twix bars everyone seemed to know. I suspect Eddie the donkey! The general feeling, though not directly expressed, was that we must be crackers. Later, we learnt that hardly anyone in the area could swim, not even the fishermen, and there was a belief that if someone drowned it was God's will. Fatalism and sea canoeing don't quite go hand in hand but I certainly wasn't going to argue the point.

At the Sound between Puffin Island and the mainland we realised that up till that point we had been sheltered from a meaty north westerly swell. The flooding tide was being sucked through Puffin Sound northwards toward Valencia and as it hit the oncoming swell it transformed the sea into a mess of angry lumps, whitecapped and threatening. There was no question of landing on Puffin Island's north coast and we had a short but interesting battle to round the western most point where again swell met race. The decision not to cross the 7½ miles of ocean to Skellig Michael was not even verbalised and we were quite relieved to find the shelter of the southern side, force a landing on a boulder strewn cove and walk to the top of this high island. Through the low cloud and drizzle the enticing, luring Skelligs could just be seen where the greyness of sea and sky merged into a blurry oneness. The perceived inaccessibility made the islands inevitably more attractive but would the weather calm down and allow two whetted appetites to be quenched?

"It's calm!"

"It's not is it?"

"C'mon let's go!"

Even the distraction of having Eddie round for breakfast didn't delay us too much and by late morning we were packed and floating, Jo in her Islander, and me in my Dancer. This combination of craft has several advantages for us. Firstly, on trips, it equalizes our paddling speed. If there are any rocky landings to be made the plastic tub usually crashes ashore first and then I'm in a good position to help land the more fragile fibre glass cargo ship. We find there's enough space for all our gear and by having the Dancer we have something to play with in any surf we may come across. After an hour's paddling we were back at the western headland of Puffin Island. The wind was light but the swell still big enough for us to lose sight of each other in occasional troughs. High water slack would be in about half an hour so even though it was spring tide we should be able to make the crossing without being swept away.

The only problem of paddling towards a small-looking island, that in reality is large,



Little Skellig

is that for a long time it never seems to get any closer. Helping alleviate this dilemma is a small spray washed rock that lies midway between Puffin Island and Little Skellig. It doesn't resemble a lemon, nor is it yellow, but for some reason its name is Lemon Rock and it was after passing this oddly named entity that we began to feel quite offshore. For a while we were accompanied by a small school of porpoise passing so close we could hear them breathe. Gannets from Little Skellig flew out in legions to spy on us. There are estimated to be 40,000 of these beautiful birds on the rock now in front of us and we revelled in watching a great many of them gliding, wheeling and soaring above us using their 6ft wingspan with masterly elegance. A handful of guillemots, kittiwakes, petrels and shags have the audacity to share Little Skellig with their much larger neighbours.

Skellig Michael, much larger than its counterpart, is a mile further out to sea and it was with satisfaction that we sat looking at the sheer sided concrete jetty built by the Commissioners of Irish Lights in 1820. It was another matter landing and again the plastic boat proved invaluable. The effort of getting there was immediately rewarded as we began to explore this island fortress. The track from the jetty to the lighthouse rises sharply and it is soon apparent that precipitous walls of rock tumble away on every side with no respite. Skellig Michael stands like a defiant gesture in splendid isolation on the

edge of a great ocean. Its history, too is mysterious and violent. In 490 AD the King of West Munster was forced to take refuge there. Sometime later monks and hermits made it their home. Vikings raided in 812 and 823. Monastic life survived, and as we climbed higher on well constructed steps, evidence of the amazingly frugal and spartan existence unfolded before us. Two oratories, a tiny church, a burial ground and 6 'beehive' cells nestle precariously 500ft above the waves. To attain the very summit of the island is an entertaining excursion which demands a climb of moderate standard, at one point clambering through a vertical through-cave, the move being known as 'threading the needle'. From our magnificent vantage point we sat in awe marvelling at Skellig Michael's grandeur and atmosphere.

Our bivouac by the jetty was interrupted by squally showers pushed in from the Atlantic by a freshening wind which hadn't been predicted by the 0033 forecast. The grey morning greeted us with curtains of rain, a sloppy sea and no sign of the mainland. Seal launching into the briny at 7 in the morning isn't my most favourite way to begin the day but without mishap we were away, escaping the storm and running before the wind. The following wind and sea sped us homeward far quicker than yesterday's outward voyage and 3½ hours after departure we were hauling ourselves ashore. Mrs Sullivan urged us to huddle by the peat fire whilst she brewed some tea. Mr Sullivan peppered us with questions. Eddie the donkey just gave us one of those "Didn't think I'd see you again" looks. Chatting with these kindhearted people for over an hour was an enlightening, humorous and humbling experience. It persuaded us to stay an extra day. Jo left a message in the shop and next morning 8 youngsters turned up for their first canoeing encounter. Parents watched. Friends took photographs. Everyone laughed. Ignoring our efforts to refuse, 2 local fishermen pressed a bagful of crabs' claws into our hands and that evening we cooked our last meal at St Finan's Bay. Between the showers, shafts of sunshine illuminated the western sky. The surf roared in and we ate like kings.

Monastic Cells on Skellig Michael



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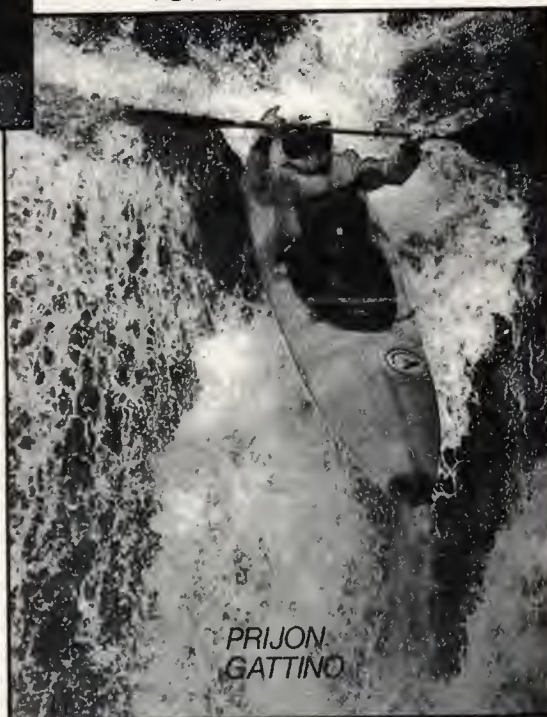




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Ode to the BCU

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But it really wasn't worth it
I have to tell you so
My card took six months to arrive
And they didn't even know

And the magazine is useless
Its always late as well
Why DID I join the BCU?
I'd rather be in hell.

I don't like competitions
I hate instructing too
Why ever did I bother
to join the BCU?

The BCU The BCU
As useless as a lump of glue
There is nothing quite like them
From Birmingham to Timbuctoo.

Its **their** fault we've no access
It simply isn't fair
- That rock which broke my boat last week
- **The**y probably put it there.

Their staff are so so lazy
They go home at half past two
And the phone is always busy
I blame the BCU!

And it didn't rain all summer
I suspect that's their fault too
Remember folks, if you're in doubt
To blame the BCU!

From the Complaints Department - we also take compliments, so if anyone has anything good to say about HQ, please write in as well!

K4 CHALLENGE

On 15-16 September Worcester Canoe Club completed a 24 hour K4 world record attempt in aid of Worcester Cathedral Tower Appeal, raising £1,000. A K4 was paddled non-stop on the River Severn on a 2½ mile circuit. Seven crews plus reserves paddled shifts of about one hour and reached 207 miles. The club is now submitting the details to the Guinness Book of Records.

We challenge other clubs to beat this distance. The circuit should be between 1 and 5 miles. Crew changeover times have to be included in the 24 hours. Full safety cover has to be provided throughout the 24 hours and the K4 must be in sight at all times. The club must provide at least 90% of the paddlers. For further details contact Elizabeth Young of Worcester Canoe Club on 0684 572280.

MEDALS FOR ANGLERS

Why is it that the BCU expels an individual such as G Wood, for taking action to further the cause of access for paddlers, while the National Federation of Anglers give medals to John Wilson and Ian Carstairs for taking similar if opposing action on behalf of the fishing fraternity?

K Dudley, Essex

Access Committee Replies: The BCU obviously deplores the fact that Ian Carstairs was awarded a medal for leading the opposition to the re-opening of the Derwent navigation: The difference however between him and Geoff Wood, is that Ian Carstairs was working within the framework of the law. Had Geoff Wood proposed to conduct his protests lawfully, perhaps he would have been awarded a medal as well!

A SUSPICIOUS SEAL

The photo of Ken Laurie in Focus 61 'Seal launching off the railway bride, River Awe, Scotland' makes me just a little suspicious. Ken's kayak looks as if it is in a perfect position to have seal-launched off the rock platform which overlooks the railway bridge pool. This platform is a popular place to jump from or, if you are brave, seal-launch. It is about 6 metres high. Your caption, however, implies that Ken launched off the railway bridge which would be nearer 20 metres high. Now I do not doubt that it is possible to seal launch off the bridge and if Ken actually did so then I apologise for doubting him. If he didn't do the full 20 metres, then I'd hate for Canoe Focus to be making folks think that this is something we'd do for fun. Seal-launching 20 metres off the Awe railway bridge is without doubt risking very serious injury indeed. One member of our club has jumped it, but his sanity is in doubt anyway.

Chris Dickinson, Dunoon

Of course Chris is correct - the photograph in question did depict a seal-launch off the rock platform rather than the railway bridge itself. I hope that this did not mislead too many people!

Canoe Focus - Your right to reply

Have you got an opinion about a canoeing issue? If something has pleased you, upset you, shocked you or made you laugh, then Canoe Focus would like to hear from you. Please address letters to: The Editor, Canoe Focus, Mapperley Hall, Lucknow Avenue, Nottingham NG3 5FA. Letters are always replied to (send SAE if possible) even if space does not permit publication. The editor reserves the right to shorten contributions to fit the space available.

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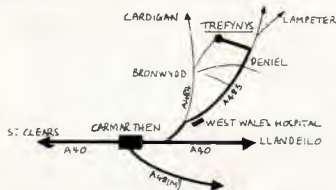
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Noticeboard

WIN A WATCH COMPETITION - FOCUS 61

For those of you still racking your brains for the location of the photograph (Focus 61), the answer was:

Top Fall, Grantully, River Tay

The winning entries were from, Kevin Campbell, Pete Astles and Jeremy Farley. To all the other people who wrote in with the correct answer (there were quite a few!) thank you for entering and better luck next time.

OH NO!

Would you believe it, yet more clubs were omitted from the BCU Yearbook and updates. They were:

SW Axe Valley Canoe Club. Mr P Lacey, Pippins Centre, Lyme Road, Axminster, Devon EX13 5AZ.

N Durham Kayak Club. A Quigley, 9 St Josephs Close, Gilesgate, Durham DH1 2JA.

EM Mansfield Canoe and OPC. G M Marriott, Holme View, Radcliffe Road, Nottingham NG12 2LF.

Sorry folks,

Heres hoping for a better list in 1990.

RIO COLCA EXPEDITION

The 1989 RIO COLCA EXPEDITION, consisting of three English paddlers, Thomas Owen-Hughes, Lewis Lyell and Douglas Bell and one Irish paddler, Paul O'Sullivan, recently returned home after spending seven weeks kayaking in Peru. The main aim of the Expedition was to make a kayak descent of the COLCA CANYON, which, at over 3500m deep, is the worlds deepest. This was achieved sucessfully and in so doing the first Irish descent was made.

The Expedition members would like to thank the following for their sponsorship and support - Allied Irish Banks Ltd, British Canoe Union, Midland Bank plc, Nevisport, New Wave paddles, North Cape, Peruvian Tourist Board, Pheonix Mountaineering Ltd, Pyranha Mouldings Ltd, Rohan, South American Explorers Club, Whitewater Ltd, Wild Water Ltd, Vango (Scotland) Ltd, Yak.

DANGER ON THE BITCHES

Anyone who's enjoyed following or competing in this summer's series of White Water Rodeos in Pembrokeshire, should temper their enthusiasm with an eye for the dangers warns Andy Middleton. The Bitches by Ramsey Island can get very bitchy indeed when big Spring tides are running, with

water much bigger than anything on UK rivers - potentially serious consequences for swims. If in doubt check locally - Andy Middleton is at Twr-y-Felin Outdoor Centre, St Davids.

CANOEING IN POLAND

News has come in of an international canoeing rally along the Polish Rivers Drweca and Wisla, finishing up in the town of Chelmo. The event takes place annually over the first 2 weeks of August, and a total distance of 320km. 1990 will be the rally's 30th birthday, and to celebrate, the organisers are encouraging Western paddlers to attend - so far the only participants from outside the Eastern bloc are the group from Holland who wrote to the BCU office. For details contact Hilda Baar, Langs de Bogen 10, 8255GG Swifterbant, Nederland.

100 MILE CANOE TEST

Next year's event (NABC) will take place during May 26-29 1990 on the River Trent, Darlaston to Nottingham.

ACOBAMBA GORGE - FIRST BRITISH DESCENT

A BCU approved expedition to Peru has made the first British descent of one of the most difficult stretches of the Rio Apurimac in Peru. The 3-man team: Fred Wondre, Ian Walsh and Terry Dawson took 7 days to negotiate the 20 mile Acobamba gorge which they describe as "quite horrific" and "physically and psychologically very hard". They were accompanied by an Italian raft (which frequently had to be portaged) and film crew. A video should be available soon

EQUIPMENT GRANTS

Pyranha are inviting applications for equipment support for expeditions outside Europe involving whitewater kayaking and canoeing. The support takes the form of Pyranha equipment at preferential rates. During the current year, Pyranha have sucessfully supported major expeditions to Turkey, Russia, Chile, the Himalayas and the Zambezi.

Applications are open until the end of February 1990 and should be made in writing giving full details of the expeditions including members, objectives and equipment requirements to Graham Mackereth, Pyranha Mouldings Ltd, Marina Village, Preston Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 3DW



One of HOPE's canoeing instructors teaches Anthony Peddle (with Spina Bifida) the draw stroke. HOPE is a new charity, centred around canoeing, which is strongly committed to help disabled people lead normal sporting lives alongside the able-bodied.



RAF Laarbruch Canoe Club celebrate a new world record - the team covered 1124km of the River Rhine in seven days, 23 hours and 31 seconds - breaking the previous record by 18 hours.

L - R Mark Watson, Andy Taylor, Neil Turner, Andy Goodsell, Pete Salisbury, Mick Williams, Chris Sharp, Pete Willis



Andy Goodsell and Mick Williams at the finish

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	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
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BCU02 Diary Wallet. Blue with silver logo, incorporates Diary/Year Planner, large pocket compartment for personal notes and two credit/business cards.	1.80	1.50
BCU03 1990 Year Planner Insert. Year Planner only. For use with diary wallet.	1.00	.80
BCU04 Key Ring. Leather, blue with silver logo design, holds several keys.	1.05	.85
BCU05 Members' Sew On Badge. Oval shaped cloth members' badge, blue logo and edging on white background, colourfast.	N/A	1.00
BCU06 Blazer Badge. Square cloth badge for blazers, embroidered logo in silver, black background.	N/A	1.50
BCU07 Members' Tie. Navy blue with two diagonal stripes and logo depicted in white, machine washable.	N/A	3.90
BCU08 Tie Pin/Lapel Badge. Stick pin suitable for ties or lapels, blue logo on silver coloured metal disc.	N/A	1.50
BCU09 Canoe Lock. Tough plastic coated cabling, length 11 feet, to be used with a padlock for securing canoe and paddle(s) on roof rack or to a fixed point ie. tree. Approved to the standard required to validate BCU Membership insurance. Padlock not supplied.	6.90	5.90
BCU10 Smurf Canoeist.	2.25	1.75
BCU11 Cadet Badge. Round cloth badge for cadets, pictures smurf canoeist in colour on a white background, colourfast.	N/A	.50
BCU12 'I ♥ Canoeists' Button Badge.	.30	.20
BCU13 'I do it . . . with the British Canoe Union' Button Badge.	.30	.20
BCU14 Keepsafe. Brightly coloured water-tight cylinder, screw-top, can be conveniently worn around the neck. Colours: Dayglo orange, Dayglo pink, yellow, red, royal blue.	1.80	1.50
BCU16 Hip Flask. Smart 4oz flask, blue leather outer with BCU heraldic emblem in gold.	12.50	10.50
BCU17 Darts Case. In blue leather with BCU logo.	2.95	2.25

STATIONERY

STA01 KANU '90 Calendar. Twelve high gloss, full colour views capturing the calm and serenity of backwoods travel and the rage and thunder of white water. 555 x 300mm.	11.50	10.50
STA03 Greetings Card. "Shooting the Rapids" colourful print of the Mattawa River, blank for special messages.	.80	.65
STA06 Licence/ID Sticker Holder. This clear plastic, self-adhesive envelope enables the transfer of your sticker between your boats. One required for each boat.	N/A	.35
STA07 Exhibition Postcard. Colourful scene depicting the Canoe Exhibition at Crystal Palace.	.15	10.
STA08 Pendant Pen. Ballpoint pen with a handy rope for wearing round your neck with BCU logo top.	1.60	1.40
STA09 Pencil Rubber. BCU logo in blue.	.45	.35
STA10 Kanu Alpin '90 Calendar.	11.50	10.50
STA11 'What Breakout?' Poster. Full colour, 590 mm x 420 mm (portrait).	2.45	1.95



GUIDES AND MAPS

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GAM01 Guide to the Waterways of the British Isles.	4.50	3.50
GAM07 Canoe Touring in East Anglia.	3.10	2.60
GAM10 Broadlands Map.	1.30	1.25
GAM11 River Thames Map. Lechlade to Richmond.	2.80	2.35
GAM12 River Severn Map.	.95	.75
GAM13 Canoeists' Guide to the River Wye.	1.55	1.20
GAM14 River Wye Map.	1.15	.95
GAM15 Austrian & Bavarian River Guide.	7.00	6.00
GAM16 Alpine White Water Guide.	4.60	3.60
GAM17 French River Notes.	.50	.30
GAM18 Canoeists' Map of French Rivers.	8.85	7.85
GAM20 River Allier Guide. French text.	5.00	4.10
GAM21 River Eyre and Leyre Guide. French text.	4.25	3.50
GAM23 River Cele Guide. French text.	5.55	4.80
GAM24 River Charente Guide. French text.	.30	.20
GAM25 River Yonne Guide. French text.	.30	.20
GAM27 Where to Launch Your boat.	5.05	4.25
GAM28 A Canoe Guide to Northern Ireland.	2.95	2.25
GAM29 A Scottish White Water Guide.	3.50	2.50
GAM30 River Thames Guide - Ordnance Survey.	5.50	5.35
GAM31 Home Pierrepont Users' Guide.	2.20	2.00
GAM32 Guide to Rivers of the West Midlands.	5.40	4.40
GAM33 Snowdonia, WW Sea and Surf.	6.90	5.90
GAM34 British Waterways Board Map.	3.75	2.75
GAM35 Rivers of Cumbria.	5.40	5.25
GAM36 Canoeists Guide to East Anglia.	3.00	2.50

STICKERS

STK01 'I love Canoeing' Sticker. Strip Design 215mm x 45mm, for windows, red heart, blue letters.	.60	.50
STK02 'God Went Canoeing' Sticker. Wording reads '... and on the seventh day God went Canoeing' strip design 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive reverse, three colour canoeist.	.60	.50
STK03 'Go Canoe a Kayak' Sticker. Strip design 185mm x 70mm, for applying to windows, three colour depicting a canoeist.	.60	.50

STICKERS Cont'd

	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
STK05 'I'd Rather Be Canoeing' Sticker. Strip design 310mm x 45mm for windows, red and white.	.60	.50
STK06 'Oceans are Free' Sticker. Strip design, 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive finish on reverse, sea canoeist silhouette, three colours.	.60	.50
STK08 'I do it . . . with the BCU' Sticker. Circular design, 100mm diameter, black and yellow, for windows.	.60	.50
STK09 Union Jack Sticker. Circular design 100mm diameter, Union Jack and BCU Logo, for windows.	.60	.50
STK10 Graphic Surfer Sticker. Strip design 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive finish on reverse. Features graphic silhouette of a paddle surfer, four colours.	.60	.50

GET INTO GEAR

CLO01 Competition Cag. Lightweight with Scotsguard proofing and PU coated, velcro strap cuffs and collar fastener, elasticated waist and sleeve ends, striking red and royal blue with contrasting stripe, BCU Members' badge sewn on. Sizes: S, M, L.	16.50	15.50
CLO02 Recreation Cag. Lightweight waterproof top with drawstring hood, velcro strap cuffs and neck fastener, elasticated waist and sleeve ends, red and royal blue with contrasting stripe, BCU Members' badge sewn on. Sizes: S, M, L.	16.50	15.50
CLO03 Overtrousers. Lightweight waterproof trousers, elasticated waist, zipped pocket, ample leg width and length, royal blue to match cags. Sizes: S, M, L.	10.75	9.75
CLO06 Thermal Paddlemitts. These mitts, in red to match our cags, have a fibrepile lining ensuring maximum warmth and comfort, even when wet.	10.50	9.50
CLO08 Paddler Motif Sweater. V-necked pullover ideal for smart or casual wear, embroidered paddler motif, fully machine washable. Sizes: S, M, L. Colours: Sky blue, oatmeal, grey, navy blue, black.	13.70	12.70
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CLO21 Sweatshirt. Round necked, fleece-lined, machine washable with paddler emblem on left breast in light blue, navy, grey or burgundy. Sizes: S, M, L.	10.20	9.20
CLO22 International "I'm a Paddler" T-Shirt. English cotton shirt, white with round neck. Logo and "I'm a Paddler" printed in four languages, depicted in blue. Sizes: 30-32, 34-36, 38-40.	5.10	4.10
CLO23 International "I'm a Paddler" Vest. Cotton vest. British made, white. "I'm a Paddler" in four languages with BCU logo, depicted in royal blue colour. Sizes: 30-32, 34-36, 38-40.	4.80	3.80
CLO26 Collared T-Shirt. 'Fred Perry' style in airtex cotton, BCU Union Jack embroidered motif. Available in navy blue, pink, pale blue, white, and yellow. Sizes: S, M, L.	10.25	9.25

GET INTO GEAR Cont'd

	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
CLO27 Widget Wallet. Zipped cash pocket, clear-pockets for credit cards and five separate compartments for visiting cards, stamps etc. Various bright colour combinations. Non-rotting nylon.	3.90	3.25
CLO28 "I'm a Paddler" Baseball Cap. White/royal blue, "I'm a Paddler" in four languages, adjustable strap.	4.40	3.40
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Made from wool and Meraklon - outstanding. Thermal insulating power. Supremely washable: quick drying: tough and hard wearing. Worn by Olympic sportsmen; International yachtsmen and top mountaineers. Colour: Dark Blue.		
CLO29 Thermal Longsleeve Crew Top. Navy. S, M, L.	13.55	12.55
CLO30 Thermal Longsleeve Zip Top. Navy. S, M, L.	17.10	16.10
CLO31 Thermal Longpants. Navy. S, M, L.	12.25	11.25
CLO32 Thermal Headover. Navy, Navy/Red, Red, One size.	5.55	4.95
CLO33 Thermal Ski Tube Socks. Navy, Red. 60cm.	4.00	3.50
WATERPROOF SACS		
CLO35 Wallet, 280mm x 170mm, adjustable cord.	5.10	4.10
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CLO38 Gregson First Aid Pack. Well designed water-resistant pack.	22.95	21.95

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BKS03 'Canoeing' by John Brailsford & Baker.	4.90	4.50
BKS04 'Canoe Games' by Dave Ruse.	8.25	7.25
BKS07 'Canoeing' - The American National Red Cross.	7.70	7.00
BKS08 'Canoeing' - The Fladbury Way by David Train.	2.65	2.45

BOOKS Cont'd

	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
BKS09 'Coastwise Navigation' by Gordon Watkins.	5.20	4.70
BKS10 'Exercises in Coastwise Navigation' by G. W. White.	4.65	4.15
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BKS43 Eskimo Rolling for Survival by Derek Hutchinson.	9.25	8.95

BOOKS Cont'd

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BKS45 Sea Kayaking by John Dowd.	9.95	8.95
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BLT02 Canoeing Handbook. Solid Bound (expected in October).	13.95	12.95
BLT04 Updates to 1981 and 1982 Canoeing Handbook. Loose leaf.	.60	.40
BLT05 Slalom Yearbook. Only available Feb-Sept.	2.30	2.00
BLT06 Wild Water Yearbook. 1989/90 edition.	2.00	1.50
BLT07 Racing/Marathon Yearbook. 1989 edition Feb-Sept.	3.00	2.50
BLT08 Information Directory. Summarised version of all information leaflets and documents available from the BCU, loose leaf, binder supplied.	Temp. unavailable	
BLT10 Coaching Logbook. Saddle-stitched.	1.80	1.20
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BLT19	Canoeing No. 9 History of Canoeing in Britain.	1.00	.70
BLT20	Canoeing No. 10 Canoeing for Disabled Persons. New Edition 1989.	4.00	3.00
BLT22	ICF Statutes Book (1985). Contains rules and regulations for all ICF disciplines.		Temp. unavailable
BLT24	Canoe Polo Coaching and Tactics by Brian Barfoot.	2.75	2.25
BLT26	Canoe Lifeguards Manual. Eight booklets covering awards and training, equipment, first aid, accident prevention and reading water and weather conditions presented in a ring binder.	11.50	10.50
BLT28	Polo Handbook 1989.	1.00	.75
BLT29	Coaching Logbook. Loose-leaf.	1.80	1.20
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		Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
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VID02	Path of the Paddle Solo & Doubles Basic.	36.50	34.50
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Regional Round Up

CEA MEETING 7 OCTOBER 1989

The regional chairmen debated issues covering the whole spectrum of canoeing activity in the regions. Through the Committee for English Affairs the views of members in the regions can be channelled through to Council, (but members must make their views known to their regional committee!). The BCU Council endorsed the CEA's recommendation and their former Chairman Brin Hughes was given the BCU Award of Merit to be presented at the London and South East Region AGM at Crystal Palace on 15 November. CEA priorities were reviewed and it was agreed that the broad objective is to provide opportunities for people to begin and continue canoeing. This will be achieved by promoting the Touring Development Plan, expanding low level competition, improving communications and strengthening the financial resource base, especially through the promotion of the new membership structure and 'taster' opportunities.

EASTERN

The regional committee is hoping that each club and affiliation will be sending representatives to the Regional AGM at Cambridge on 12 December to comment on last year's programme and suggest targets for 1990. We are acutely aware of the costs of club membership of the BCU and want to maximise benefits for contributors. Fresh ideas are positively welcomed, so come to the AGM, maps and agenda from Robin Dromard 0279 658612. Clubs that might like to have a go at polo are reminded that Herts has a fully equipped trailer of polo equipment for hire. Contact Ann Barrie 0923 247430.

EAST MIDLANDS

A successful canoe tour on the Trent and Soar was held on 29 October, raising money for the Yorkshire Derwent Trust. It is planned to increase the number of canoe tours in the East Midlands next year. The region pool slalom will be on 6 January, details from Pearl Mulholland. Richard Fox is planning the creation of a Nottingham based slalom training squad. After comments about lack of information to clubs and regional paddlers, the region will be setting up a newsletter to keep paddlers informed. Details from Simon Dawson 0602 868803.

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST

The region's first polo tournament produced a close result with University of London and Martlet sharing the same number of points and the same goal difference. ULU finally won on goals scored. Crawley were third and Edmonton (new to polo) a very creditable fourth. Thanks to Curly Barker and Meridian C C for organising the competition. 'Adur Canoe Rescue' has been formed in Shoreham. Anyone interested in canoe lifeguard work or

training for CCLG awards, apply to Mark Osborne, Adur Water Activities Centre, Brighton Road, Shoreham, West Sussex BN43 5LT. The regional pool slalom is being held at Allaynes School on Saturday 6 January. The winners will go on to the inter-regional finals at Crystal Palace. Enquiries to Vince Lamph, Flat 6, 36 Manor Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 2LE (01 650 0197).

NORTHERN

There will be slalom training at Abbey Rapids on the first Sunday of each month over the winter - details from Ken Warman, telephone 0833 37040. The Boxing Day Race will be from the Sands, Durham City. Paddlers should turn up for an 11am start. The next Northumbria canoeists meeting will be held at the Green Tree Inn, Benwell Village, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Monday 4 December 1989 at 7.30pm. Eddie Palmer and Dave Gray are exploring opportunities of canoeing involvement in the 1990 Gateshead Garden Festival. There are two new canoe clubs in Northumbria - Coquet Canoe Club and Barnard Castle Canoeists, each with over 30 members already.

NORTH WEST

The polo 'ladder' is now in full swing. Regular matches are being held at Broughton Baths Salford. The regional newsletter continues to be circulated to clubs, the Editor is grateful to the high proportion of clubs who have paid the small reduced subscription. This has been made possible by the generous support from PYRANHA. The Editor eagerly awaits more material! Please contact Mike Burt, 19 Millhouse Lane, Croft, Warrington WA3 7HA. The committee continues to take the initiative in relation to the site at Trafford Watersports Centre, however, we will soon come up against the problem of insurance, accountability etc. By the time this is read another AGM will have gone by. If there are still vacancies for certain posts your interest will be welcomed. **Please** support officers who have been elected. As part of Manchester's bid for the Olympic Games in 1996, the ten local councils will be holding a Youth Games next summer, following a pilot scheme this year. Polo and Slalom will probably be the canoeing events included. The Committee has been asked to organise these events on the day, with Councils preparing their own teams.

SOUTHERN

The Sports Council have contacted the Southern Region Committee regarding water recreation use at Blashford Lakes, near Ringwood, Hants. Anyone wishing to set up a canoeing organisation there please contact Charles Hicks on 0252 850657. The first Southern Region polo league match was held at Aldershot Lido on 9 September. Congratulations to Wasps (the winners) and condolences to Bere Forest Juniors, Blackwater Valley, BCCC and Marlow (in that order). We mean to have three league matches next year. Any southern region paddler prepared to update the BCU Guide to the Waterways for a waterway in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire or the Isle of Wight - please contact Ted Moulding on 0908 676343 - urgently!

SOUTH WEST

Congratulations to Rose Purkiss and Angus Fitchett for being the first mixed crew home in the Arctic Canoe Race; and also to the clubs that represented the Region in the Haslar finals - Truro doing particularly well in this, their first real year of competition. Training days for young and developing paddlers in K1, K2, slalom and for Polo officials are being planned for the winter season. Details in the Newsletter due in November. Please note the details of the new Dart Access Agreement - the RAO has done excellent work on this and we MUST stick to it for the riparian owners are themselves willing to help our sport. The SW Sports Council thanks those clubs that responded to the questionnaire on Coastal Recreation; they have produced a number of points that might have been missed otherwise. Jim Cornwell has been appointed to represent the SW council for Sport and Recreation on the Wessex Region of the National Rivers Authority.

WEST MIDLANDS

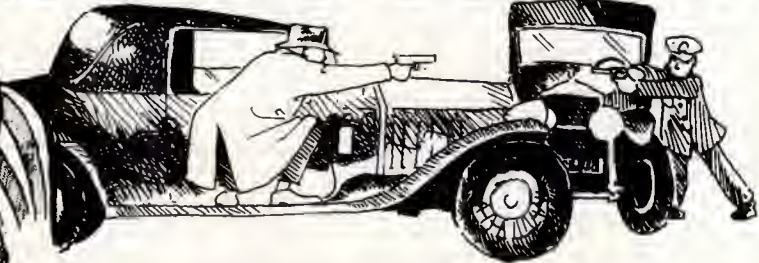
The regional whitewater racing trophy was returned for the second year running by Mercia Canoe Club. The closing date for copy for the 1990 regional handbook is 31 December. Clubs are reminded that they must return their questionnaires by the above date. Questionnaires and other copy to Brian Porter, Croft House, Bransford, Worcester WR6 5JD. Birmingham Boat and Leisure Life show will take place at the National Exhibition Centre in February. The BCU stand will be organised and run by Solihull Canoe Club. Anything for inclusion in the stand to be sent to P Jones, 173 Long Moor Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands. Please note that this exhibition attracts nationwide interest so all clubs can contribute. Paddlathon 1990 will take place in early June: for details please contact Regional Touring Secretary, M Hubbard, 78 Derrydown Road, Birmingham B42 1RT.

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

Early next year Kingston Kayak Club are running a course for teaching canoeing to the disabled. This course is being organised by the club's Chairman Geoff Davis and anyone wishing further details should contact him 0482 505587. The Regional polo season is underway with a record number of 44 teams entered. This will involve organising 23 tournaments throughout the season - excluding the National Championships and the Regional Championships in April. For the first time the Open League has been divided into 3 divisions and the Ladies' League, with 13 teams entered, has been split into two divisions. The Under 18's League has a total of 8 teams entered. Although the Region is suffering from a lack of venues, members of all clubs involved in polo have been actively canvassing personally all known pools in their areas which has produced some new venues. Participants in SLICS - Slalom Improvement Centres - have now been selected and the courses are well underway in both the Humberside area and also Yorkshire. The success of last year's SLICS has ensured its continuation.



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Trade News

OLYMPUS OUTDOOR WORLD

Next time you find yourself motionless on the M25, you might consider paying a visit to this recently opened retail outlet. Proclaimed as a new concept in outdoor shopping, Olympus Outdoor World is a huge 'out of town' complex with sections for all the major outdoor activities, including climbing, rambling, camping and of course, canoeing.

There is a wide range of canoeing stock including boats and equipment for all the major competitive disciplines, plenty of plastic and even the odd surf ski. Olympus Outdoor World is at West Thurrock Retail Park in Essex, near junction 30: eventually it is hoped to establish a nationwide chain - so keep a lookout, there may soon be a store near you!

PLAYBOATER

A new canoeing shop has recently opened in the Thames Valley. Taking full advantage of the excellent whitewater weirs in the area, Playboater caters for all levels of paddler but specialises in state of the art hot dogging and river running equipment.

In addition to organising Thames Weir Rodeos as part of the national circuit, Playboater offers free advice on local weir conditions. These include Old Windsor (15 minutes away) Marlow (20 minutes) Boulton (2 minutes) Hurley (20 minutes) and many others.

Playboater is situated in the Haymill Centre which itself offers a wide range of sports and leisure facilities with ample parking.

For the best equipment and friendly advice from experienced staff, drop in for a coffee and a chat.

Contact shop manager Shaun Baker on (0628) 667507 for further details and weir conditions.

'LINE AND TRACK PACK'

Test Report by Barry Howell

Earlier in the year I received a prototype version of the 'Line and Track Pack' from Suzy/Mobile Adventure for testing and subsequent report. I duly tested it and reported back, unfavourably as it happened. There were a number of teething problems to sort out.

Last week I received the Mark 2 model for testing - what a pleasant surprise to note the improvements made to the pack. We now have an extremely functional, ready to use piece of open canoe equipment which makes for an easier life when lining and tracking.

Essentially the pack consists of a twin compartment pack, each half housing a 50ft length of floating, non kink line. The diameter of line is sensible, robust enough to handle comfortably with cold, wet hands,

and tough enough to take a good load. The bright colour of the line aids visibility in difficult conditions. Attached to the end of each line is a strong alloy 'D' ring, which facilitates easy attachment, either to bow or stern, or to the 'bridle' which comes as part of the pack.

Well made, in strong nylon webbing, the bridle is easily adjustable by means of heavy duty plastic slidelocks, and can be easily fitted to produce an anchor point on the keel line at bow or stern. A bridle such as this saves a lot of the time normally spent tying a line in place.

The whole package measures no more than 15" x 6" when wrapped up, and a nice touch is the velcro fastening which enables the pack to be strapped to a thwart when not in use.

I tested the 'Line and Track Pack' on the river Brathay last Sunday and was delighted with it. A sound piece of gear, I'd thoroughly recommend it.

TRENDS AT CURRENT TRENDS

After 3 years of hard work and 2 years since it opened to members of the canoeing world, Current Trends of the steep green roof at Holme Pierrepont, has been checking progress.

Visitors this year may have had to wait a little longer for their food, as the Cafeteria has been bursting at the seams for most of this warm, dry season. While the canoe school continues to develop nicely on the water under the able guidance of Mike Devlin, there has been a significant development on land, with the introduction of orienteering around the slalom course and through the country park. The Regional Sports Council and the National Centre itself have been a great help, and on the opening day, well over a hundred individuals tried the course, many of them tasting orienteering for the first time. Several different lengths of orienteering course are available to try, and a call to Current Trends on 0602 818844 will give you further details.

Rafting down the whitewater course has expanded exponentially and Current Trends' fully trained and certificated white water rafting guides have been very busy this season. Current Trends soon found that their own white water raft needed a sister ship if they were to keep up with the demand from the non-canoeing public waiting to get wet and taste the thrill of a rapid river descent.

Late in the season, after looking desperately for another raft, they were saved by a generous offer from T L Elliot Trading Ltd, who let them have a whitewater raft at just about one third of the recommended retail

price. Thanks must go to Mr Elliott and his co-director David Train for helping out so splendidly.

February 89 also saw the launch of the Current Trends range of buoyancy aids and rescue equipment. This sold so fast that it was impossible to keep sufficient gear on the shelves in the Nottingham based canoe school. Consequently the production has been reorganised.

While still working for Current Trends as an instructor, Simon Dawson will be producing the equipment through his own firm, "Dawson Canoeing Systems".

The popular Current Trends Buoyancy Aid has now been improved with a zip, and an optional climbing style waistbelt to give failsafe belays in gorge type paddling. An intermediate BA has 8 kg of buoyancy in a durable casing without a rescue harness, designed for the intermediate paddler on grade 2 - 4 water. This BA has good potential for disabled paddlers. Future products will be mainly in the touring and recreational market, including specialist squirt and hot dog equipment.

All products will be available from Simon Dawson direct (0602 868803 for brochure) or through Current Trends, which will always maintain a full range of demonstration models for inspection and trial.

Showroom sales have seen a large proportion going to rodeo kayaks, and squirt boats. The deep pools which are such an essential part of the slalom course design are ideal for squirting, and this season Jason Buxton seems to hold the record for the longest mystery move... the length of the looping pool. He was quite red in the face when he surfaced - he said the spontaneous applause from the bank embarrassed him! Certainly it is nice to see that the slalom course has encouraged recreational canoeing and rafting generally, and has not become the preserve of the competitive paddler.

Frank Goodman

THE PROPER CHANNELS

A new consultancy has recently been registered in Cardiff, aptly named PROPER CHANNELS LTD. This is a company specializing in hydraulic designs for sport, and in particular the design of artificial slalom courses.

Those canoeists who wish to sample Proper Channels' work should visit the Burrs site at Bury in Lancashire, where they have just completed a major reconstruction of the Irwell by placing over 500 tons of Millstone Grit blocks into the river to create a regional facility. The newly-formed canoe club already has over a hundred members, and they think that a restriction of membership may be necessary if they are to cope with the flush of enthusiastic youngsters that are clamouring for white water experience. Don't go until you've checked with the Burrs club, however, as one of the problems at the moment, as with most white water sites, is that water is almost non-existent after the prolonged drought!

Frank Goodman



BOOKS



THE SQUIRT BOOK

by Jim Snyder. Illustrated by Nealy.
Menasha Ridge Press, Alabama.
ISBN 0-89732-075-1

Reviewed by Simon Dawson

Every new outdoor toy has its craze. In my youth it was skate boards. 1989 was the mountain bike. Next year will be the summer of the squirt boat. But like all exceptional toys, the squirt boat will remain after the craze dies away. Even the most jaded white-water tyro can enjoy cartwheeling effortlessly end over end down an eddy line, and no true canoeing poser can resist paddling into a stopper only to disappear, and reappear skyrocketing into the air 60ft downstream.

Squirt boats are easy to paddle, but difficult to paddle well. The Americans say it takes 70 hours to get out of the novice stage. What other boat requires you to tip upstream when breaking in? Fortunately a text book on squirt boat technique is now available.

The Squirt Book requires reading many times to get full value. The first read through is for laughs, giggling at a combination of Nealy cartoons and American physco-babble such as: 'There is an esoteric concept of blending wills with the river, meshing our curiosity with the river's power of alignment with gravity. A river is a symbol of the time function applied to the stable factors of the environment.'

The next read through is more serious. Despite the language, the book is an exceptionally good manual of squirt boat technique. It starts at the basic bow and stern squirt on flat water, and progresses through intermediate stages to the more nerve-wracking exploits of mystery moves, splats and stopper blasting. Each section contains a historical introduction to the move, a step by step description of the action, and a list of helpful hints and tips. Alongside the text are clear photographs, and superb cartoon drawings explaining the actions and the hydrodynamic forces concerned.

After that the Squirt Book becomes a work of reference, to keep close by as you get to grips with this new style of canoeing. A quick dip into the relevant chapter will often produce the answer to a problem of style or technique, or suggest new variations on a move already mastered. Finally, for the expert who wants to pretend he is in total relaxed control of his boat, there is a chapter on paddle twirls and flash moves.

To sum up, 'squirting will take you to the edge of your ability to experience the incredible' (English translation; squirting is exciting). 'Kayakers everywhere appreciate the attitudinal evolution that the sport provides at a very personal level' (kayakers like to learn and develop). This book will help you in that aim whilst still encouraging a sense of mystery and exploration (American translation, 'half the fun is not knowing what you're doing').

SEEKERS OF THE HORIZON

Edited by Will Nordby
The Globe Pequot Press, Chester,
Connecticut
ISBN 0-87106-634-3
Price \$22.95.

Reviewed by Nigel Foster

An inspirational anthology of sea kayaking accounts by eleven different paddlers. The journeys span nearly half the globe and nearly half a century, and make fascinating reading.

The true stories recount adventures from as long ago as 1956, with Hannes Lindemann's outstanding trans-Atlantic crossing in a 17'1" rubberized canvas folding kayak; a crossing I have wanted to know more about for years. It is compulsive reading and it is easy to find oneself cleaning the barnacles from the fingernails after the description of one particular night in a December storm which Lindemann spent clinging to the upturned hull of his craft.

Susan Meredith's remembrances of her even earlier kayaking experiences around Alaska in the 1940's evoke a real sense of the passing of time and cultures. Her first paddling was in a double baidarka which she soon changed for a seal-skin Nunivak kayak, at a time when the skin craft were dropping out of local use.

If seal-skin and canvas encourage you to look sideways, then what about a 2,500 mile journey made by Chris Cunningham in a kayak made of paper? Or Audrey Sutherland's Hawaiian adventure in a 6ft only inflatable kayak? (She has in fact travelled some 4,500 miles in inflatable kayaks).

One of the nice features of the book is that it balances longer trips with short ones, gripping moments with tranquillity. Kaufmann in the first chapter describes a single early morning journey in the San Francisco Bay; a journey he has made numerous times over the years. Rice recounts a Baffin Island journey in a folding double to view the large numbers of Beluga (white whales) in the Cumberland Sound area.

Of the 11 tales, it was John Bauman's circumnavigation of Iceland in 1986 that caught my eye and demanded my first attention, and I must admit to then picking my way through the book a chapter at a time in random order. Having read the whole book, I realize the skill and judgement of the editor, who for example, followed an unfollowable chapter by Lindemann with Frank Goodman's chapter '7 tales for 7 lives'. Frank skilfully presents 7 paddling experiences which for example take the reader out on the river in an open canoe with his wife Doreen and a picnic hamper, and with such contrast, onto the knife edged cliff top of Cape Horn Island in a gale.

The other 3 inclusions in this book are a mammoth circuit by Chris Duff; up to 1,000

miles of 'Old Man River' Mississippi, through the Great Lakes, down the St Lawrence and around the coast to his starting point, a year and a half later, a 1,200 mile circuit of the Hawaiian Islands by Greg Blanchette, and Will Nordby's own contributing chapter on a sea kayaking experience in Glacier Bay. This latter trip includes a somewhat unsettling account of the discovery of the fresh remains of another paddler, recently killed and eaten by a black bear.

'Seekers of the Horizon' presents a broad view of the many facets of life on the move, of appeal not only to paddlers. It is a book I will want to read again and again.

WILD WATER CANOEING

by Fred Barlow
ISBN 1-85284-031-5. Cicerone Press £4.25
reviewed by Bill Taylor

I cannot say with any honesty that I have enjoyed reviewing Fred Barlow's book 'Wild Water Canoeing'.

I found it both a frustrating and extremely disappointing read. The book itself is liberally illustrated with photos and line drawings, the majority of which show incorrect technique, outdated strokes or at worst advocate, dubious if not outright dangerous practices.

I really had thought that the advice about removing your life jacket, when caught in a stopper, throwing it over the returning wave so you may dive down and out to collect the jacket later, had been laid to rest with the demise of the F1 slalom class.

Both the low and high tele mark are given considerable coverage in the Chapters on basic and advanced techniques. In describing the latter Fred suggests a high shoulder position which just invites dislocation of the joint.

Also not being a squirt boat fanatic I am a bit reluctant to follow the advice of the cross bow rudder, as being the correct stroke for surfing stoppers.

The suggestion that while learning capsizing drill you count up to forty seconds before banging on the up turned hull to be righted, well it is all a bit silly really!

I could go on listing the many errors but what is the point?

I have no reason to doubt Fred Barlow's commitment and enthusiasm for the sport of canoeing, but this book has done neither Fred or the sport in general justice.

If you intend to purchase a white water instruction manual then for the extra five pounds, Ray Rowe's latest book, or if you like humour with your reading; Nealy's book 'kayak' are a better option.

Frankly 'Wild Water Canoeing' by Fred Barlow has nothing to recommend it, and from Cicerone Press, the publishers of some quality walking guides in the past, I expected something a little better.

Editors note: The access committee have also pointed out that readers may find Fred Barlow's advice on access misleading. An article is reprinted from Canoe Focus and this may give the impression that the article reflects BCU policy on access. It does not!



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Access

KINGFISHER CALL

Avon Wildlife Trust are so concerned about pollution in Britain's rivers, that they have set up a nationwide survey to monitor Kingfisher population levels. Pollution conversely affects kingfishers - they are at the top of the river food chain and toxic chemicals can also accumulate in their bodies. So next time you're out paddling and spot a kingfisher, why not give them a call? and help to clean up Britain's rivers. 0272-251540.

SUCCESS IN THE S W

The continuing policy of negotiating with riparian owners has brought some benefits to canoeists using the Rivers Dart, Exe and Barle:

River Dart

After long and difficult negotiations with the riparian owners an agreement has been signed which actually extends the canoeing season by one month on the popular 'loop' from Newbridge to Holne Bridge. This section is now open from 1 October until 28 February. The Dartmeet section remains open for just January and February and unauthorised runs at any time could be met with court action. For any outings on the Dart permission must first be obtained from the new Local Access Officer, Kevin Chamberlain, (phone 03643 215), who will pass on details of the new agreement and give out identification numbers. All boats being paddled by authorised canoeists will have to display this number on race size white discs and action will be taken against those failing to do so.

River Exe

The riparian owners have agreed to permit canoeing during the second half of February between Bolham and Thorverton if the river is high. Written permission is required by all who paddle on this river, contact Adam Box, 9 Tuckers Meadow, Crediton, Devon EX17 3NT, enclosing sae.

River Barle

This river's canoeing season has also been changed, with us gaining the whole of October whilst losing the last two weeks of February. Access requests should now be sent to the LAO, Graham Warnecke, 15 Longfield, Mells, Frome, Somerset BA11 3PY. On these and other rivers in the South West cowboy runs out of season do nothing but damage to our credibility and are cited by the fishermen as the factor most likely to cause friction. Please ensure that you always get permission to paddle and stick rigidly to the conditions relating to each river.

Adam Box, RAO Devon & Cornwall

NRA CANOEING REPS

The NRA, the government quango which has taken over the water recreation and pollution functions of the now defunct water authorities, has appointed Regional River Advisory Committees (RRAC's). The extent to which the committees will address canoeists' access problems, of course remains to be seen: a hopeful sign however is the number of committees which have accepted nominations by canoeists.

So far, the successful candidates are:

David Moss	-	Thames
Jim Cornwell	-	Wessex
Chris Hawkesworth	-	Yorkshire
Eddie Palmer	-	Northumbria
Celia Hayward	-	Wales

NORTHERN AGREEMENTS

Access agreements are now operating on the Rivers Ure (Yorkshire) and Crake (Cumbria). The Ure is open between Hack Falls and Slenningford, from 1 October to 31 March. At other times of year, canoeing is allowed on Thursdays, and between 1 June and 30 September on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. A spate clause is included, dependant on the water level at Slenningford. Before paddling please contact the LAO, Ken Harrap, 159 Old Road, Overton, Wakefield or Frances Petchey at Slenningford Caravan Site (0765) 85201.

The Crake agreement covers the stretch from Brown Howe car park (Coniston Water) and Greenodd, between 1 November and 31 March. Details from the LAO Colin Litten, Low Bank Ground, Coniston, Cumbria (05394) 41314 or Holly Bank Cottage, Sloutergate, Kirkby in Furness, Cumbria (022989) 629.

Before paddling either of these rivers, it is vital to check with the relevant LAO - details of agreements can be altered at short notice. The Crake Agreement is in great danger of being lost altogether because some folk have been paddling at odd times

YORKSHIRE OUSE TO BWB

British Waterways now control 4 1/2 miles of the Ouse from Goole to Widdington Ings, previously controlled by York City Council. The additional stretch is now open to all BCU members displaying BWB licences.

AFON CONWAY

An agreement has recently been negotiated for this river and interested parties should send an SAE to the LAO, Phil Blane, The Towers OPC, Capel Curig, Gwynedd

DISAPPOINTING TURNOUT

Less than 100 paddlers participated in rallies held to support the Yorkshire Derwent Appeal. As reported in Access Extra, a court case has recently gone against YDT, setting a precedent for landowners to revoke ancient navigation rights. The court basically ruled that the Rights of Way Act does not apply to waterways - this has such serious implications for all river users that YDT are appealing against the decision: hence October's rallies.

For those who did brave the equinoctial gales of 28 - 29 October, the events brought their own very special kind of enjoyment. On the Severn paddle, this consisted of being blown upstream at a high rate of knots and four miles of very exciting white horses. By the Sunday, the wind had abated slightly and was blowing downstream rather than up for the Trent party. Quite a few people turned up for this event (we had to use our toes as well as fingers), including celebrities such as Access Committee Chairman, Mike Twiggs and Graham Smith of YDT. With 12 miles to paddle, the following wind was very welcome, and although no world records fell, the group reached the Kings Mills pubstop with almost unseemly haste. Not so the River Soar party (there were actually two separate tours to the East Midlands event) who still had not reached Trent Lock as darkness fell - that's all day opening for you!

Despite the lack of response from canoeists, the rallies did attract some media interest and national press coverage. Several regions are still organising collections at local events, so give generously if you get the chance - these court cases are going to affect all of us.

BCU IS BLASTED

Chairman of the Union's Access Committee, Mike Twiggs, blasted the membership of the BCU over the poor turnout in support of the Yorkshire Derwent Appeal. He went on to say "over the past 12 months BCU Headquarters have received a steady stream of letters critical of the Committee's apparent lack of support and action over the problems of access. But in view of the near total lack of support at the 3 events of the weekend, this would indicate that the overwhelming majority of the BCU members do not wish their voluntary officers to continue their work in this area and are happy with the present access situation".

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TOURING EVENTS 1990



Canoe Belgium 90

The T&RC is organising a party to attend the 21 Rallye Touristique organised by the Kayak Club Lesse/Wanlin based at Houyet in the Ardennes region of Belgium over the Easter weekend. The main rally is class 1/2 water with a good choice of water up to class 3 on Saturday. Travel over from Dover early Friday morning and return late Monday. Approximate cost £100-150. Full details from Colin Kempson, 108 East Street, Olney, Bucks MK46 4DJ.

Canoe Portugal 90

A small party is being organised to attend the Tejo (Tagus) Nautical Rally taking four days over 66+ miles of the class 1/2 river finishing at Lisbon. Probably by ferry from Plymouth about the 25 April and returning, following a few days touring the Lisbon area and through northern Portugal on the return route, about 6/7 May. Approximate cost £500. Full details as above.

Canoe France 90

Following the success of the Dordogne tour in 1989 the T&RC are organising a weeks tour to paddle the clean and peaceful Charante and other nearby waters. Departing evening Friday 15 June and returning late Sunday 24 June. Approximate cost £180-260 (depending on whether you wish to eat out in the evenings!). Full details as above.

Canoe Danube 90

Anyone who read the Danube report in the last edition of Focus and who would like to make up a party for the 1990 event is asked to get in touch with Rodney Baker, 11 Holt Fen, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambs CB6 3HB. There is the possibility of arranging for a load of canoes to be transported together and possible shared use over different stretches of the tour. The organisers would particularly like to see a British Youth Team over there... are there any touring youths out there who are interested?

WEILS DISEASE UPDATE

Great emphasis has been placed up until now, on the importance of a speedy blood test being obtained where Weil's disease is suspected.

What is more important, however, is that treatment with antibiotics is commenced where the symptoms indicate the possibility of Weil's disease. **This should be within 24-28 hours of onset.**

A speedy result from a blood test becomes important where treatment is being withheld - although if there is sufficient concern for a sample to be taken, antibiotics should be administered as a precaution anyway.

The BCU information statement is being updated to emphasise the importance of early treatment.

The current indicators are, that the long, hot summer has seen a general decrease in the number of confirmed cases of this rare illness, although the official figures are not yet to hand.

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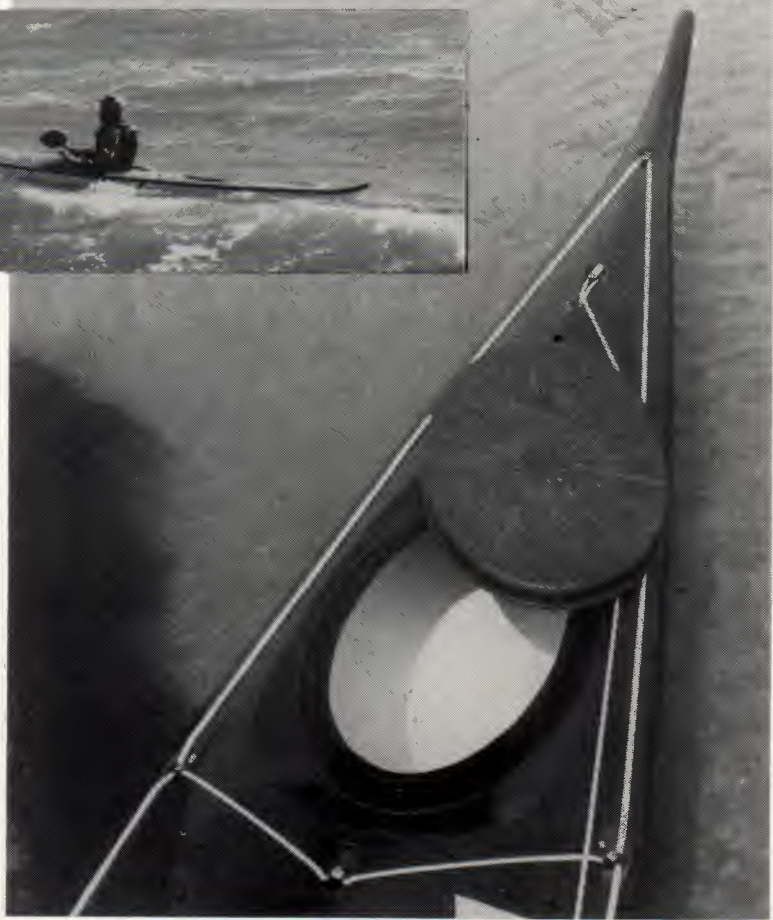
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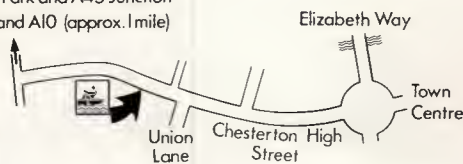
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HIGH WINDS AND MINEFIELDS IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

by Mike Devlin

A journey undertaken to raise funds for the Tenovus Institute for Cancer Research.

There we were, sat in our heavily laden Nordkapps in the narrows outside Port Stanley. Eighteen hours of flying time past, and 8000 miles of ocean separating us from England. Ahead of us, the intended circumnavigation of the Falkland Islands. All thought focused on our position deep in the south Atlantic and the task at hand. The inspiration responsible for getting us this far was temporarily replaced by a feeling of dread, as we conjured up pictures of 'roaring forties', raging and stormy seas. Wildly remote, physically challenging and dramatically beautiful, the Southern Ocean was not going to hold any disappointment for us.

Our deep concentration was broken with a farewell display by a school of dolphins. Dread was replaced by excitement and magical wonder as they escorted us as we steered our kayaks towards Cape Pembroke, the open sea and what was to be a 25 day journey around a group of islands where it is possible to say that 'nature is still in charge'.

The distinct smell of peat smoke and the sight of the red and green tin roofs of Port Stanley slowly faded as we pushed out into the swell. "Take it from me" said Knutt Goodwin, ex captain of the Island supply vessel, "... when the wind starts to blow around here, it can increase one degree on the Beaufort Scale every 5 minutes." Slight exaggeration by a concerned fellow seafarer we thought. Sound advice we discovered!

Soon progress was halted by a Force 8. Heads down, we tried to make for Horse Point, bows forced skywards. Turning for shelter we had a difficult reef crossing to make our only landing point which

was, according to our map, a mined beach. Gingerly we pulled up onto the rocks, assuming, or at least hoping, that the Argentineans had not had the technology to lay mines under solid rock. As we sat in our survival tent waiting for the wind to drop, the local Islander plane flew over. We later discovered the pilot had reported back that three canoeists were camped below the water-line on a mined beach in gale force winds. This news probably convinced the population of Port Stanley that they were justified in their feelings that we should never make such a journey and indeed, it made some feel that we would never return.

Eventually, we were able to continue to Seal Point, setting up camp in the high tussock grass covering the whole of the Point. The

Leaving Port Stanley



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was set for the rest of the expedition. The weather would always to be our enemy and we found that an early start, breaking during the day and paddling again early evening, allowed us to escape the worst of the high winds.

Strong swells caused an awkward paddle due to refracted waves off the cliffs. Landing areas were always few and far between, meaning long hours on the water, leaving us stiff legged and 'bursting for relief'. On this day, my urgency to abandon the boat was tempered by finding myself in a 'Category 3 Area Red'. Unmarked from the sea, these areas are known to contain mines and/or booby traps. My previous urgency seemed of little consequence as I carefully retraced my steps back to the boat, albeit in somewhat of a hurry to prevent Tim and Andy following me ashore. My announcement that we could not land was met with a hail of abuse as I had not been the only one so desperately needing relief!

Having continued for a further two hours, we reached Pleasant Roads in the fading light. We were immediately aware of our seclusion and closeness to the natural world as we sighted our first Gentoos penguin rookery. By the time we had changed, fading light

had introduced unfamiliar constellations in the clear night sky.

Despite realisation that we should take more heed of the pessimistic 'local' weather lore, we again found ourselves committed to gale force 8 winds, acres of paddle-grabbing kelp, an unpleasant bivvy site and an enforced rest day, which gave us further opportunity to explore the plentiful wildlife of the islands. Sea Lions, Elephant, Fur and Leopard Seals, Upland and Kelp Geese, Snowy Sheathbills and a variety of teal are to be found along the shore. King, Gentoos, Jackass and Rockhopper penguins, Blackbrowed albatross and King Cormorants fish the sea, whilst Johnny Rooks, Striated Carracaras and Giant Petrels scavenge in the rookeries.

The Falklands archipelago is made up of two large islands and some 200 smaller ones, all in total smaller than Wales, with a population of 2,000 people and 650,000 sheep. The rolling moorland is interspersed by stone runs, mysterious 'rivers' of angular boulders; vast, grassy planes dotted with lakes and ponds; mountains over 2000ft high; spectacular rugged coastline fringed with 10ft tussock grass and bays of white sand around brilliant blue, clear water.

Full of enthusiasm as we continued our journey on a clear and calm day, we were accompanied by low flying albatross. Recalling the famous line from the Ancient Mariner, we thought it ironic that we were heading for Motley Point. We called at settlements on Bleaker and Lively Island where we received true Falkland Islands hospitality. Our 'good spell' didn't last long though, and we ended the day again paddling in deteriorating conditions. Our stop at Driftwood Point for one evening lapsed into five, pinned down by continuous storm force winds. Nowhere seemed sheltered and after a particularly strong gust of 70 knots, our trusty Force 10 tent ripped from its pegs, flapping wildly and disturbing a particularly pleasant cuppa! The tent, however, lived up to its name and emerged in tact.

The crossing of the Bay of Harbours was exciting to say the least, as again, the weather caught us out with a Force 8 gale, separating us and forcing us on our way individually. Thoughts of capsizing put aside, we battled the swell, breaking crest after crest, hitting the full blast of the wind. At Bull Point, the wind dropped as suddenly as it had started, but once at Blind Island, the squalls picked up again. Yet another unpleasant night.

The difficult conditions, hard paddling and stormy delays began to indicate that a change of plan was needed. We planned to cross Falkland Sound having navigated Eagle Passage, but by the time we had reached Ruggles Island, time was against us and we had to abandon any hope of crossing to West Falkland.

As each day passed, we thought the wind might ease allowing us to make up lost time, but we were far too optimistic. Having rounded the South West corner of East Falkland and intending to paddle up Falkland Sound, the winds were now coming from the north. We arrived in Port San Carlos after a further five days of hard paddling, always into the wind. Our journey was eased a little by the tremendous hospitality received at the San Carlos and Port Sussex settlements,

giving relief to our staple dehydrated diet.

The hardest paddling day of our trip saw us achieving a distance of six miles in six hours. Progress was becoming almost painfully slow and starting to jeopardise any hope of catching the last plane out of Port Stanley before Christmas. To add insult to injury, the weather threw more squalls at us, the worst hitting us so strongly that staying upright was almost impossible and staying together impractical.

After more wonderful hospitality at Salvador and Port Louis we paddled down Berkeley Sound with a day to spare. Although conditions were in our favour, the wind and the islands were not about to give in. The last push for home was just 8 miles from Kidney Island, by a straight 6 mile run into Port Stanley into a Force 8 again. So near, yet so far.

The wind never relented and we each fought our private final battle with the elements and struggled towards the Narrows, the scene of our paddle with the dolphins some 25 days earlier. It was not to allow us the luxury of a leisurely, triumphant paddle into Port Stanley. We thought the smell of burning peat and sight of corrugated tin roofs would never materialise.

Finally, we arrived in Port Stanley. Our welcoming party may have been small in number, but the first to shake our hands and thrust into them a welcome can of beer, was Knutt Goodwin, that fellow seafarer who, more than anyone, knew what we had been through and who was happy to admit that his scepticism about our chances had been unfounded. Unable to claim a complete circumnavigation perhaps, but this was reward enough.

Then, almost as a sign of submission to our stubbornness, the wind died down to nothing.

Falklands Team - Mike Devlin, Andy Forsyth, Tim Gunn.

Special thanks should go to :- the locals of Port Stanley and the 'Camp' for their support and encouragement throughout our stay in the Falklands, Mike Morley (Central TV), Valley Canoe Products, Current Trends, Vango, Psion, Lendal, Oakham School, Damart, countless others without whose help we would never have made it, and to the companies and individuals who gave so generously to the funds of the Tenovus Institute for Cancer Research



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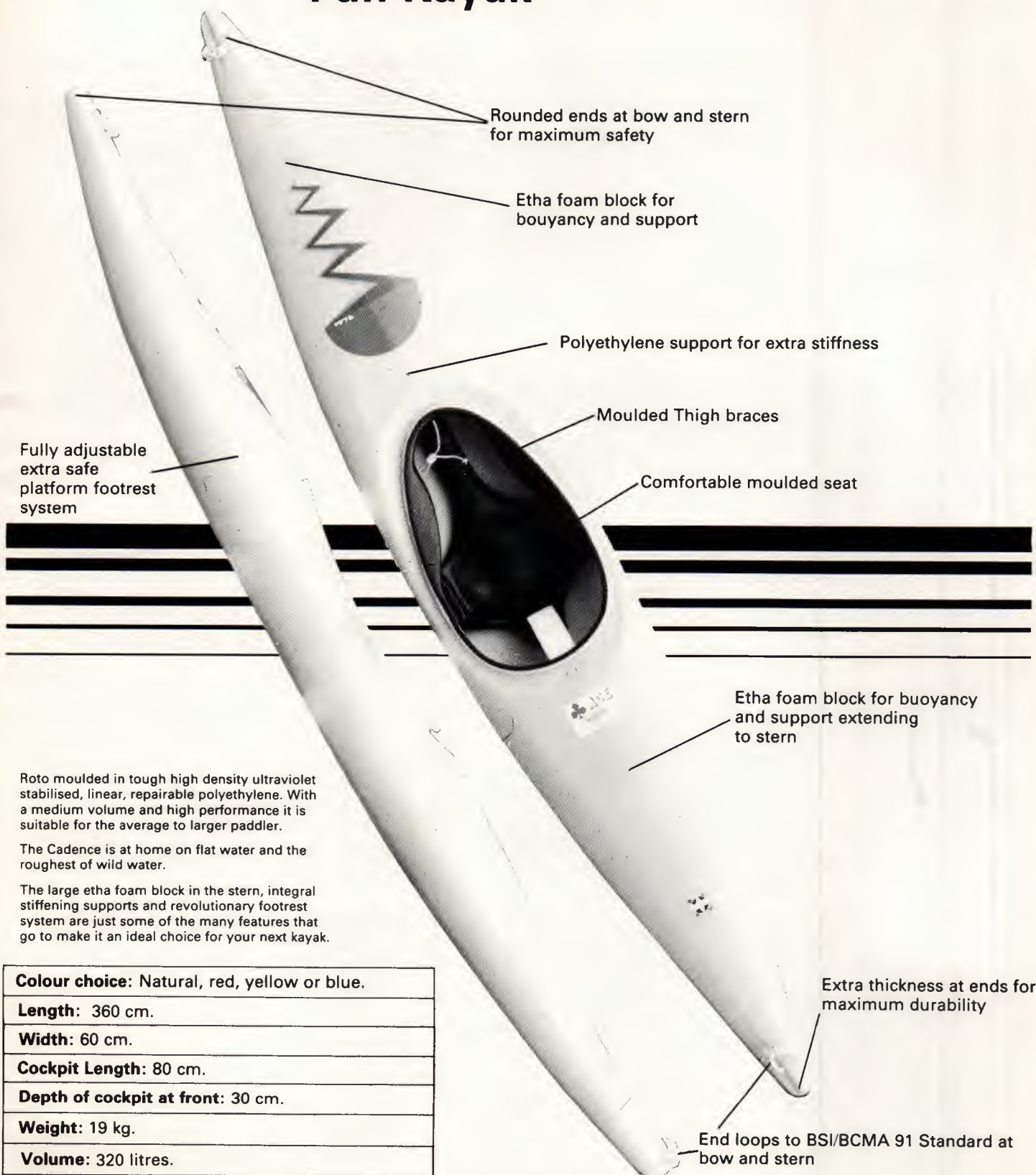


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